

# COUNTRY LIFE

THE JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN  
COUNTRY LIFE AND COUNTRY PURSUITS. ILLUSTRATED.

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THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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## THE QUEEN . . . IN IRELAND.

EVERYTHING else that has occurred during the past few days has been dwarfed in interest by the Queen's visit to Ireland. Even the silly attempt made upon a life of extraordinary popularity became a matter of almost minor importance in comparison with the Queen's visit, for when all is said and done the attack upon the Heir to the Throne was the mad freak of a silly boy, and no harm was done by it; whereas, on the other hand, the welcome given to the Queen in Ireland was among the most tremendous pageants of her long reign. Only those who had the rare good fortune to be present in Dublin during those glorious days can realise how splendid the whole scene was, how many and moving were the incidents of the first

day alone, to say nothing of those which came later. Two central scenes there were, the first when the Queen first set her foot on Irish soil, the second when she entered the boundary of the ancient City of Dublin; both were extraordinarily impressive, and very distinct in character. Let us endeavour, so to speak, to paint them in words. And first of Kingstown, as there the slope from the main road to the sea is long and gentle, so that the place may be said to be built for spectacle. Each of the many thousands of spectators could see everything, and this is what they saw. Immediately in front a gay pavilion, round which all sorts of illustrious personages in gorgeous uniforms were grouped; on the right the obelisk, marking the spot where George IV. landed and gave Kingstown its name; above the pavilion the tall masts of the yachts; in the background the hill of Howth and the whole bay, looking extraordinarily beautiful; and on the right beyond the breakwater the grim ships of war dressed in those gay flags which are always the more impressive by virtue of their very incongruity. Out of the pavilion, assisted by an Indian servant, came the Queen, and the combination of circumstance and symbols of war was, when one came to think of it, of exceptional interest and significance. There was the Fleet, which, with the character of the British race, is the cause of our greatness; the swarthy face of the Indian attendant brought home to one very forcibly the idea of the far-reaching character of the Queen's empire; last of all came the Queen herself, a small woman, eighty years of age and more, but conspicuously the head and centre of all. Then the pent-up excitement burst out, and the rest of the day was one prodigious shout, one tremendous acclamation.

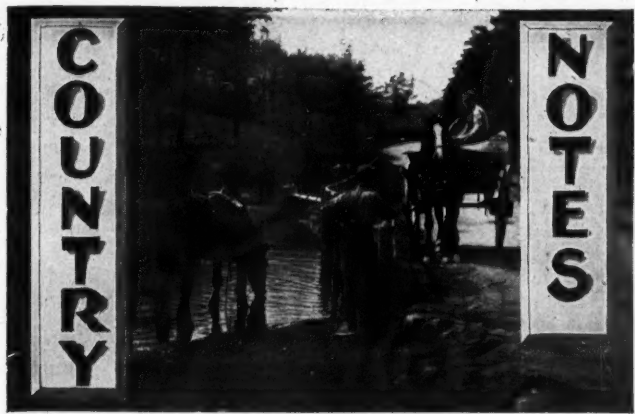
The climax was reached at the city boundary. There everything was vastly fine and heraldic, but the heraldry and the trappings were soon forgotten, for here the people were completely carried away by their emotion. For a long time proceedings could not be carried on because of the shouting, and at the end, when the Town Clerk in a loud and clear voice read the Queen's reply to the multitude, it is a literal fact that many of the spectators burst into tears. It is extraordinary, but it is true, and it may be noted almost as a scientific fact, that the desire to weep was contagious or infectious, for among those who shed tears was at least one English merchant prince who, in ordinary times, is not in the least impressionable. And yet, perhaps, it is not so very extraordinary after all. The noise, the shouting, and the colour set the nerves vibrating, and a spectator who takes the trouble to analyse his own feelings on an occasion of this sort will find that his throat seems to become constricted, and that his eyes grow moist of themselves and without thought on his part. Nor has he need to be ashamed of showing his feelings. His is a generous emotion. Strong men wept on that great day. Their tears did them honour.

No political significance is to be attached to the Queen's visit. That is the watchword, and in a narrow sense it is true. That is to say, there is no advantage gained by anyone of the numerous political parties by the fact that the Queen has had a great reception. But there is no sort of doubt that the monarchy as an institution has been much strengthened by the events of the past week in England, in Scotland, in Wales; the fact that we have the best sovereign in the world is constantly being impressed not only upon our minds, but also upon our eyes. But forty years and more had elapsed between the Queen's two visits to Ireland, and the Irish people had not unnaturally begun to feel the flame of personal loyalty burn less ardently than if they had seen the sovereign often. There were good reasons, of course, why Her Majesty should have been so long away from Ireland. Within full view of the windows of the Viceregal Lodge is the spot where the Phoenix Park murders were committed, and they were not calculated to encourage Royal visitors. But that bad time, be it hoped, is over for ever now. The Irish are a warm-hearted people, and the pathetic figure of the Queen has obviously moved their sympathy and their love. They are also to a larger extent than is generally believed a practical people, and they have not failed to recognise the vast difference which the Royal visit has made to the fortunes of Dublin. The Dublin season of 1900 was to have been the worst and dullest on record; it is now far and away the most splendid, and all trade in Dublin is flourishing accordingly. As for the malcontents, they simply cannot obtain a hearing, and that is as it should be.

## Our Portrait Illustration.

LADY MABEL ANNESLEY, whose portrait forms our frontispiece, is the eldest daughter of Earl Annesley. Her father, who is the fifth Earl, was formerly in the Scots Guards and served in the Kaffir War of 1851 to 1853, and in the Crimea in 1854, when he was severely wounded. One of the family seats, Castlewellan, County Down, was illustrated in these pages a few weeks since. The beautiful domain was visited by the Duke and Duchess of York during their Irish tour of two years ago.





UPS and downs continue to be reported from the seat of war, and the information vouchsafed is such that criticism is unsafe and even unjust. Three things, however, are clear to demonstration. The task which we have undertaken is of the toughest, and neither the enemy nor the country in which fighting must take place—least of all the country—is to be despised. Next, the greatest of our difficulties is that of remounts, and it is consoling to learn that they are arriving in considerable numbers, for in Natal and the Orange Free State there is the horse-sickness to be feared, and the Beira Expedition has the pleasant prospect of the fly before it. Not so pleasant was it to hear a melancholy Irish friend declare the other day that, thanks to the war, nearly all the unsound horses had left Ireland. Last, and perhaps most remarkable of all, is the persistent manifestation of indomitable public spirit. Be our losses what they may, nobody in any rank of society really doubts that we shall win through in the end.

The "infernal mobility" (phrase of Mr. Kipling's invention, and by him attributed to the battle-ship) of the Boer with his guns becomes more and more apparent as the campaign progresses, and especially in the light of the Reddesburg disaster, where a big force of Boers appears to have mounted four guns in position only a few miles from Bethanie, a station on our lines of communication not far from headquarters, entirely without our observation. Lack of proper scouting by our own men is obviously part of the cause of the mishap; but wonderful mobility of the enemy is obviously another part. Colonel Albrecht's remarks on the war, so extremely valuable on many points, throw little light on this, that is, to our thinking, the darkest wonder of it all—how the Boers move their guns with such celerity in such unpromising country. We have been told that their supply of horses is nearly at an end. Evidence of facts looks rather as if the shortcoming were in the other camp.

When one reads of the difficulty of finding remounts for our cavalry in South Africa, consideration is at once drawn to the type of horse that best fits the circumstances out there, and the place where such a type is to be found. The type required is of the small, wiry, hardy kind, that can live on scanty food and do hard work with hard living. Nowhere in the world are these equine conditions found better fulfilled than in Spain, where the Moorish occupation still leaves so many traces, and amongst them a quality of horse-flesh that owes a big debt to the Barb blood. The horses are small in size, they are not always ideal of symmetry, but they are always hardy, always fit, full of spirit, and very handy. They, beyond all others that we know, are of the type to be of good service to us in our present campaign, and their qualities have not escaped the notice of our authorities at home. Spain, as a nation, is not altogether our friend, possibly we have scarcely treated her "as such," but considerations of the pocket commonly outweigh those of the heart, and the Spaniard would not be likely to refuse a good price for a cheaply-bred horse just because it was going to carry a Briton.

An amusing and unkind contemporary remarks that "our aristocrats may not have much brains, but they have still less fear. They are not afraid to fight or to die. There are fifty-two earls in our ranks in South Africa, and half a hundred heirs to earldoms." As a matter of fact, of course, our aristocracy have the same kind of brains as the rest of us, and the average of clever men amongst them is much the same as that in an equal number of cultivated commoners. For our part, too, we are proud of the devoted courage which the nobility are showing no less universally than the rank and file of British citizens. It is splendid. And for the errors of judgment that are committed we heard recently an apology made which contained some grim consolation. It was that it was well that Englishmen did not

use all their intelligence, since, if they did, they would occupy the world. The inventor of that original idea was, we fancy, Mr. Kipling.

So the Sharpshooters are gone on the way to Africa, and Lord Dunraven, who has had a great deal to do in organising and equipping the corps, goes with them. But it is likely that he will be attached to the staff of Lord Roberts. Lord Dunraven has played many parts in this world. He has been sportsman, steeplechaser, soldier, war correspondent, yachtsman, explorer, ranch owner, and man of fashion. Slight of frame, he is as tough as steel, and he has been very careful to keep in good physical condition all his life. He has often been heard to say that he had never been educated, but, as a matter of fact, he has written one very pleasant book, "The Great Divide," and few men are possessed of more natural sagacity and shrewdness. Personally he is the gayest and most genial of men.

The quartermaster of the Sharpshooters is Lieutenant J. Archibald Hamilton, who is Lord Dunraven's secretary, and has played nearly as many parts as his principal. He is a barrister on the Western Circuit; he is a keen hunting man and an eager politician; he has contributed many bright articles to *COUNTRY LIFE*; and he has been far more interested than Lord Dunraven himself in the latter's racing stable. Lord Rosebery, it may be remembered, left Oxford early because he had a difference of opinion with the authorities upon the question whether an undergraduate might run horses. More precocious than Lord Rosebery, Mr. Hamilton had a difference with his schoolmasters upon the same question. He and a few schoolboy friends actually bought a race-horse, and ran him for some time surreptitiously. But they were discovered and duly whipped in time. In appearance Mr. Hamilton is the very opposite of Lord Dunraven, and a typical Englishman. Burly, clean-shaven, and of a cheerful countenance, attired in a long khaki coat, he reminds one very strongly of the "Friar of Orders Grey"—and so do a good many of our trusty Yeomen.

The attempt upon the life of the Prince of Wales is happily a matter of no importance, and of next to no significance. A silly and apparently half-witted boy, using a revolver which was little better or worse than a toy, fired several barrels at the best-liked man in England, and missed—as most men who know not how to handle a revolver do, even at the shortest range. From the utterances of the boy afterwards it would seem that, although not an emissary of the notorious Doctor Leyds, there is little doubt that he had been influenced by his observations. All that remains to be said is that the Prince of Wales behaved as would have been expected of him. He did not show the slightest sign of alarm; he described his assailant as *pauvre fou*; he continued his journey as if nothing had happened out of the ordinary. But the Princess, although she made no demonstration, must have suffered a severe shock. An Irish journalist has, perhaps, somewhat exaggerated the philosophic calm of the Prince in saying that he understood that the Prince was glad to be shot at, as it was a new experience.

Public attention is concentrated upon Ireland a good deal just now, and bulls are being made literally in herds. Of the journalistic cattle this, from the *Irish Times*, is probably the best: "May we not hope that in our manifestation of affection and esteem for her who for so many chequered years has been a true mother to her people we may find a common basis on which to erect that superstructure of National Unity which is the true foundation of all national greatness." The odd thing is that this, like many other bulls perpetrated in the same office, is a demonstration that the very air of Dublin is taurine, for most of the staff of the *Irish Times* are Scotchmen. These things will be better looked after in a week or two, for Mr. W. Algernon Locker, once editor of the *Morning Post* and then of the *London Letter*, which never attained the success it deserved, has become editor of the *Irish Times* within the past week. Few men have shown a nicer taste in matters literary.

The Saxon visitor to Dublin is being treated as if he had a golden fleece, and is being most accurately shorn. He finds his consolation in the sayings of the natives, of which a correspondent sends us a selection. A visitor, intent on seeing the Queen land at Kingstown, gave to the hotel valet the same instructions which the Queen of the May gave to her mother. Finding that he had not been called at all, he remonstrated, only to be told: "Sure I am very busy myself," as if the valet, not the visitor, was the person who mattered. The same valet, rebuked by another visitor for not answering the bell, said: "I did not come"—with an accent on the not—"because I thought you were after ringing for me to call you, and I knew I had done that already." Later in the day the same two visitors began to drive in a very indifferent jaunting-car from Kingstown to Dublin, and, complaining of the pace, which was that of the snail, they were informed that "a borrowed horse has no conscience." This

truth was emphasised, in a thoroughly Irish way, by the redoubted jarvey on the spot. To show that a borrowed horse has no conscience he flogged it without mercy.

"But," writes the same correspondent, "the invasion of Dublin by German waiters is infinitely worse, because their faults are not relieved by so much as a gleam of humour. Here are the exploits of one, an elegant youth and a slim, not in the Boer sense, within twenty-four hours. A tankard of beer was ordered, but came not. The ironical guest remarked that, having been ordered in 1899, it ought to have arrived by 1900. The waiter went to the office to enquire after the vintage. I asked him for those toothsome delicacies, Dublin prawns, which were lying on the central table. He went in the other direction. I said, 'There they are, just past the ham.' He passed the ham to me bodily. Patience was finally exhausted when, in the place of a humble glass of bitter, he brought a liqueur glass filled with bitters. It is no disgrace to a German not to know English, but I submit that it is a scandal that hotel-keepers, who get these waiters cheaply so that the men themselves may learn English, should allow them to cause this kind of inconvenience to guests." We agree most cordially.

The trout-fishing season is with us again, delayed somewhat later than usual, no doubt, by the abnormal weather of our spring, and yet again we shall, with no less doubt, enter on the eternal discussions about the ability of fish to detect colour and the nutrition of salmon in fresh water. It is now generally held that the salmon does not assimilate food, as he ascends the rivers at least, so that our baits are accepted by him more in the spirit of fun and mischief than with serious intent. Singular and manifold as our recognised baits for the salmon are, there is one in use in some of the French rivers that is not within our philosophy, and that is the common domestic mouse, with the hook pushed in at his mouth (the creature is dead, let it be said, for the sake of humanity) and brought out at any convenient part of his furry little body. It is well to be conceived that with the tail waving in the stream he might be an attractive lure. It also seems to indicate the remarkable indifference of fish that we have sometimes suspected in regard to the exact kind of lure that they will take when in the taking humour.

The question whether fish, and more notably trout, recognise colour in the fly that is offered them has been often debated, and certainly the consensus of opinion is that they do show some appreciation of it. If other evidence were lacking, the care taken in getting the exact shade for the olive duns and the rest would suffice, in spite of the views on the other side of at least one high authority, and if the general opinion is to be accepted, we would indicate a point in which the fly maker often fails to satisfy its demands, taking this very instance of the olive dun as an illustration. You will often find the body of this fly made of a very good likeness in colour to that of the insect it is meant to imitate, while the fly is dry. But even in dry-fly fishing the body of the insect will be wetted, and unless special and rather unusual care has been taken in the selection of the silk, it will assume a far darker hue, quite unlike that of the insect, in the water. The inference is obvious, that all silks (and feathers too in the case of wet flies) should be put into water before being used, to see whether they then give the true colour that is required.

The appointment of a Royal Commission to look into the salmon fisheries question would be satisfactory but for one reason. Similar bodies have in the past earned the reproach of dilatoriness. They sit, and sit, and sit, and then publish a blue book that no man reads, while the very fact of their existence is in the meanwhile an obstacle to other efforts, and an effective answer to enquiries. But the decay of the British salmon is a matter of urgent importance. It is affecting three classes, first, the labouring fisherman, whom it threatens to deprive of employment; second, sportsmen who more and more are driven to neglect home rivers, and seek their recreation in Norway, entailing a loss of their custom and patronage; third, owners of riparian property, netting and angling alike falling in value. What is wanted is prompt, vigorous action, the suppression of the local fishery boards that have proved a failure, a well-considered campaign against wholesale poaching, and enquiry into pollution. It may fairly be doubted whether an elaborate commission offers means of dealing with the matter.

The country, meaning thereby the provinces, is not very well represented in the great chess tournament now being held at the City of London Club. Of course the professionals, or as they love to be dubbed, as if they were leaders in art or literature, the "Masters" (with a large capital), are town birds. "Of Bohemia," is not a description at which they would grumble. The amateurs, as it happens, are all of metropolitan fame.

Southampton has not sent up Mr. Blake, nor Cambridge Mr. Gunston, from Edinburgh Mr. D. Y. Mills has not arrived, Mr. Atkins has not come from Northampton, and Mr. Bellingham keeps at Birmingham. Practically, in fact, they are all from the City and North London clubs. It is long since professionals and amateurs met at this game, and the betting is all in favour of the former, the tip being Blackburn for first place, with Teichman as second string. As soon as the battle is over it will be time for competitors to get ready for the international tourney that is to be an attraction of the Paris Exhibition. In county chess, the honours this year are likely to lie with Surrey, which on Saturday defeated by ten games to six the hitherto unbeaten Essex, the two metropolitan counties, as a matter of fact, being very much stronger than the country teams. Even Cambridge, though reinforced by the strong University Club, has had in all its encounters to lower its flag to Essex, though it succeeded in beating Surrey once and becoming champion county for a season. Surrey has now to meet Gloucestershire, and after the victory, which there is every reason to anticipate, will hold the premier position during 1900. The competition is extremely interesting, though the crowd is not attracted by chess as much as by cricket or football.

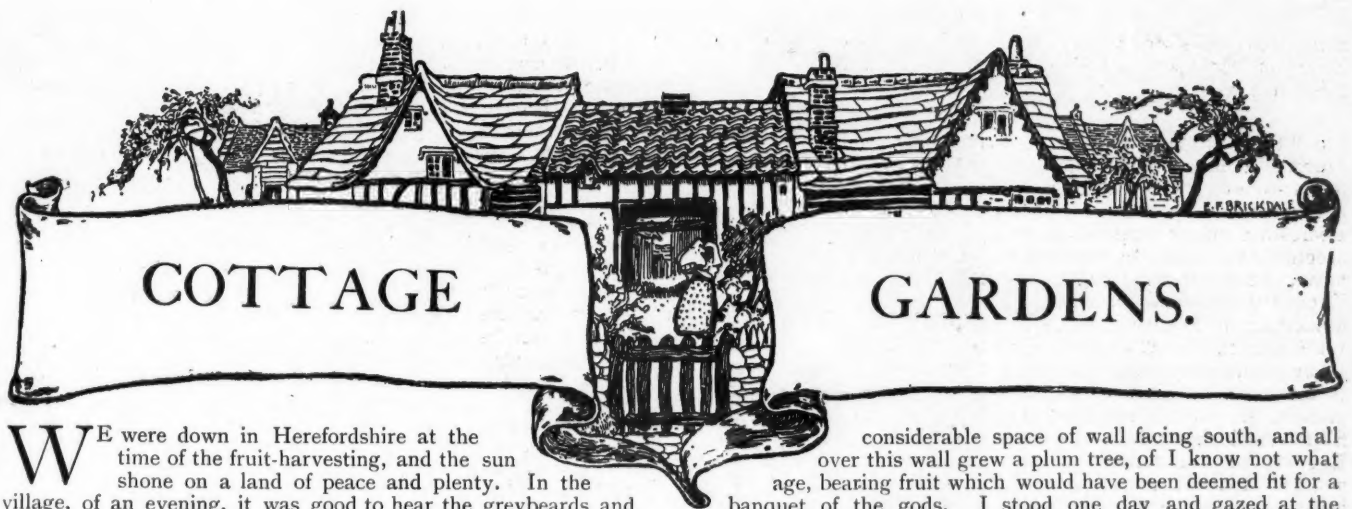
It is matter of frequent remark how thriftless our country-folk are in comparison with the frugal and saving peasant-proprietors of France. No doubt each quality has its proper defects. At the same time there are one or two hints that our own folk might profitably, and without any loss of self-respect or other fine qualities, take from the French peasant, and notably in the way in which he avails himself of every foot of his cottage wall for the training of a fruit tree or a vine. How rarely, by comparison, do we see a useful bit of cottage wall put to this good purpose in England, yet how easily it might be done. We cannot grow the vine to much good purpose; but the trained apple tree will always give good return for the very little labour it exacts. We can help our poorer country neighbours more than a little by showing them what can be done in this way.

The British householder has only too much to suffer from the iniquitous "rings" of the tradesmen and the middlemen who are his purveyors. There is a delightful custom in the French towns by which some of such practices are checkmated, and the "ring" is made by the householder's own servant in his defence. In the smaller towns of France it is the custom for the cooks to do the daily household marketing at the daily market. They go round the stalls, see of what there is plenty and of what there are but few, and on that basis form a "ring," fixing the price that they will give that day for cabbages, fowls, turkeys, and the rest. The custom is quite well understood, and works so well for the householder that whereas he, being a Briton, might have to pay seven francs, let us say, for a small turkey, if he were to do his own marketing, his cook, forming one of the ring aforesaid, will buy the same bird for something like three francs.

There is a good deal of speculation just now as to what the grouse may be doing on those moors that have been under snow for weeks and weeks. It appears that in some places the birds have begun nesting under most unfavourable circumstances, while in others they have been so discouraged by the cold and snow that not even yet are they sitting. Far better, in ultimate result, will be the domestic efforts of those birds that have deferred them till conditions are more kindly. A late season (and this will inevitably be very late) is not necessarily a bad one; but the best-intentioned nesting efforts, while the snow stays obstinately on the hills, are likely to be brought to nought.

Cannan v. the Earl of Abingdon, which was tried a week ago, was not only important but amusing, and the display of forensic wit which it provoked was distinctly above the average. The question was whether, for purposes of toll, a man on a bicycle was a pedestrian, or the bicycle was a vehicle. Mr. Glen argued that the man was a pedestrian, since he propelled himself with his feet, and he went so far as to say a man with wooden legs had feet "for the purposes of the Act." On any other interpretation he pointed out that a man on roller skates would be liable to be charged toll for two four-wheeled vehicles. Mr. A. B. Shaw, however, succeeded in persuading Justices Bigham and Phillimore to hold—and this is the first time that a Court of any importance has done so—that a bicycle was a two-wheeled vehicle. As the case was a Berkshire case, and as the Berkshire roads are as a rule simply excellent, one need not grudge the toll; but there are lots of hypothetical cases which the ingenious might like to have tried. Suppose, for example, that the bicyclist carried his bicycle in his hand; would it be a vehicle or a parcel? Is a bicycle to be counted a two-wheeled carriage or a four-wheeled? If neither it goes free. And, after all, the roller skates might really make a leading case. All the same, if County Councils will keep the roads in order cyclists will pay cheerfully.





WE were down in Herefordshire at the time of the fruit-harvesting, and the sun shone on a land of peace and plenty. In the village, of an evening, it was good to hear the greybeards and the gossips, leaning across gates and against walls, exchange complacent notes as to their garden crops. Our landlord, honest man! worked all day long in Worcester Town; but by five he was at home, by six he had finished his ample tea and was again at work—in his garden. I loved to seek him there. His rugged, homely face never met mine without a cheery smile, in which the patience which sweetened his daily lot seemed to come somehow to the fore. We were in the village for rest and quiet, and because the air was fine and clear. Our landlord, a master-mason, was tenant of a modest, squarely-built house, with ground before and behind. Before, the ground was a garden; behind, it was an orchard. John tilled and tended his garden in the evenings and holiday afternoons; the orchard looked after itself, with the help of the pony, the ducks, and the chicks.

I had something of a shock when first I made acquaintance with John's garden. I was used to a method of gardening which revealed, at worst, an ordered disorder. The disorder of John's garden was undisguised. Never have I seen an odder spectacle.

The weeds were, doubtless, past reckoning with; but the plot appeared to represent not so much a struggle between Nature and Man as a playground, where Nature took Man by the hand and benevolently bade him share the game. John's crops were almost superabundant. The rows and groups of various vegetables showed no clearly-marked boundaries; one ran gaily into another, and the weeds filled up any possible gaps. It seemed to me that the owner's proceedings were simplicity itself. I never saw John interfere with any vegetable life which flourished. Rather did he stand by respectfully, and, looking at his rampant cabbages, bid them go on and prosper. His operations were confined to the uprooting of stalks too rotten to support longer their own feeble weight, and to the subsequent digging and replanting of the soil. John's sowings were as casual as the rest of his undertakings, and if he mistook or mixed his seeds he felt the matter was not worth over-much concern. Something would come up somehow; and, come up what might, it was sure to flourish—for that was the queer part of it. John's crops just "grew themselves." I ceased to wonder greatly at John's luck when I went further afield in that Herefordshire village.

There was old Dame Candy at the straggling cottage opposite the smithy. Her two-storied dwelling boasted a

considerable space of wall facing south, and all over this wall grew a plum tree, of I know not what age, bearing fruit which would have been deemed fit for a banquet of the gods. I stood one day and gazed at the gracious sight; the tree was in full yield—a mass of fruit, crimson and gold. I asked the dame—with anxious desire to produce a copy—by what name the plums were known. She smiled and curtseyed.

"I calls 'em Crown Queens, missy," she said simply.

I thanked her, and bade envy go; for I was very sure that no Crown Queens were catalogued in any nurseryman's list.

Finding that I wished to be a purchaser, the old dame called a smocked urchin, and bade him mount a ladder to bring down the best he could pick. I begged her to name a price; and when—with bated breath—she suggested fourpence a pound, I assured her the fruit was worth three times that sum. What, I asked, did the crops usually bring to her?

"Maybe a few shillin's," replied my cottage friend, "if I send to market."

The market, I learned, was at Worcester, and the possible profits were half-a-crown a "pot"—or basket holding forty pounds of fruit.

Next to the smithy stood the thatched cottage of old George, set in the midst

of a garden which rivalled John's for rank luxuriance. Only George had an artist's soul, and he grew flowers in plenty round about his cot, and in forgotten corners a modest store of vegetables. His south wall was a mass of graceful greenery, where an ancient vine clung to the time-stained bricks. His hedges were the sporting place of the *Convolvulus major* (George knew it as bindweed), with the largest trumpets of purest white that ever could have summoned



RANK LUXURIANCE.

home Titania's fays. On either side of his doorway great clumps of southernwood grew bush-like; and, beyond them, the ground was carpeted with the small musk, which reared itself against the sheltering timbered walls till it almost attained the dignity of a climber. For the rest, George's garden was a bewildering mass of colour, even in the late summer-time.

Through that Herefordshire village ran a high road, which, when it left the cottages behind, passed on amid a fertile orchard country. There were public paths through every orchard; for, as John said, who in that fruit-laden spot had cause or temptation to steal? The damson trees overhung the cottage garden hedges, and strewed their purple store beneath the feet of careless passers-by. The "windfalls" in the orchards rotted where they lay; even the children sauntering home from school thought it

waste of time to pause awhile beneath the boughs which cast their plenty on the soft rich soil.

I went one day perhaps half a mile beyond the village, and turned from the high road down a lane which dipped sharply to a narrow valley watered by a stream. (The stream was not bridged—you crossed it in what fashion your fancy might dictate; and after rain, your fancy was freely exercised.) But, ere I reached the stream, I saw to right and left of me the gates of two cottage gardens. Now, on the right, the ground was banked high, and the garden and its gate were level with my head; but on the left, the slope had reached almost its lowest point, and from the lane I could have stepped straight on to the garden path. On either side of the left-hand gate grew an apricot tree covered with fruit. The trees looked old, and seemed to lack any sort of pruning and tendance; but their boughs caught the sunshine, and never shall I forget their golden glory. Peering under the apricot branches I could see the cottager's home, and his babies at play by the door. But the gate on the right-hand side of the lane was broken; and the cottage beyond it showed great gaps in its thatched roof, and paneless windows, and a smokeless chimney. Rough steps had been cut in the steep bank, and up these I climbed thoughtfully. I had a mind to see what Nature had done with the deserted handiwork of puny Man.

There was rank grass in most places, of course, and weeds which wrestled with the grass for mastery; but between what had once been garden borders ran paths that had once been gravelled. A rustic arbour of elaborate construction—the ambitious villager's Taj-Mahal!—was absolutely hidden by the woodbine, jessamine, and small white clematis which climbed from the interlacings of its roof to the thorn trees overhead. The Seven Sisters rose covered an arch which had been framed of the lithe willow stems trellised between supports of bent saplings, and reared opposite the arbour at the edge of a tiny lawn. I paced along the weedy paths, and strayed from them to the forsaken borders, plucking a bunch of snapdragons, red and yellow and white.



NATURE'S PLAYGROUND.



WILD ROSES.

At the back of a border, in fullest sunshine, I came on a plum tree. To my surprise, I saw that the tree had been most carefully trained espalier-wise, and that it bore fruit much finer than Dame Candy's Crown Queens. Apparently, it had occurred to no one to visit the neglected garden—not even to the dwellers in the neighbouring cottage. I glanced round and saw a few yards off another astonishing evidence of skilled cultivation. Once more a plum tree, though of no choice variety, the fruit being small and of a dark purple. But the tree itself had been trained so as to have the appearance of a rounded tent, the branches spreading gracefully outward from the trunk and then falling to the ground. Drawing aside some of the boughs, I passed under them, and found myself within a charming natural arbour, walled with green leaves and purple fruit, which grew so closely as to almost entirely exclude the light of day. The unknown gardener's method struck me as quaint and original; but the sight of his handiwork, retaining amid surroundings of such comparative desolation the ordered results of a master of his calling, gave an impression of strangeness and sadness which was curiously oppressive. I felt no desire to taste the choice fruit which evidenced the loving care of its humble cultivator; but made haste to quit the spot and to leave the deserted garden to the honoured ghosts who surely walked therein, and by some weird influence repelled the would-be thief and the uninvited guest.

E. L. D.-A.

## DRIVING PHEASANTS.

STILL occasionally there appear in the Press lamentations over the decadence of a sport in which the dog now plays no part. Pheasant shooting of to-day with its "swarms of tame pheasants" driven up into some imaginary corner is contrasted with the equally imaginative pheasant shooting of some former period. In the latter the cock pheasant is depicted as fool enough to wait for the pointers, setters, or spaniels to indicate his whereabouts, or to push him up for the leisurely sportsman who knows nothing of "stops" or beaters, but does apparently know how to induce cock pheasants to refrain from the use of their legs without employing either the one or the other. But pheasants never were fools, and the beauty of the English of some of the articles referred to does not disguise the fact from those who know something of the natural history of the pheasant that the writers are contrasting two imaginary pictures for which the foundation, in fact, is of the very slightest. That pheasants have been killed over teams of spaniels is true enough—the writer has enjoyed such sport himself—but these dogs were assisted by stops, just as the beaters to-day have to be assisted by them to prevent the pheasants scattering up every hedgerow in the country. There is nothing more disheartening in pheasant shooting than a stern chase. The pheasant always has the best of it, and the beautiful picture of the spaniels threading out the line and at last coming up with the pheasant, his burnished plumage flashing in the sun, and the retrieving spaniel can never appeal to the shooter who understands that the pheasant is the most artful of all game birds; that to pursue him as the scribes advise would be like the pursuit of Boer mounted men by British infantry, the further they went the farther they would get behind.

The true contrast between the past and the present in its best sense is very different to this. Neither the pointer, the setter, nor the spaniel enters into the contrast on either side. The old style of pheasant shooting, that



which was the parent of the present manner, is what may be fairly described as the keepers' method. It varied according to the coverts, and whether or not ground game was a consideration, but it always had for its object the killing of as many birds in the day as possible. In order to do this the beats were so planned as to drive the birds constantly forward into some thick covert, where they would, with a few stops in front and the line of beaters behind, allow themselves to be surrounded within a few yards of lines of guns on each side of them.

The birds, flushed in such circumstances, were well within range of several guns, and it was no uncommon thing to find several loads sent into one bird before he had got much above the undergrowth, and to hear the shooters roaring at each other to "let 'em rise." Such scenes were repeated as the day's journey brought the guns up to every thick bit of covert in turn, and yet the shooters engaged talked of rocketers and of having three dead birds in the air at a time, and were content.

Occasionally a bird rising on some high ground would give a shooter a foretaste of what every pheasant should be, and would perhaps set him thinking about the possibilities of making every pheasant offer the same sporting shots that then were only to be had by accident. It is easy to look back and wonder why we ever permitted the older style of flushing pheasants, now that we know the better way; but the change was not easy. It took a man who could not only recognise the difference in sportsmanship, but had besides enough self-will to turn a deaf ear to keepers when they lamented that "we shall never see them birds again." Indeed, a good many birds were in those early days of change sacrificed to an ideal; for it is not to be supposed that we, or our fathers, learnt in a day or a season how the flight of birds could be controlled with the precision of the movement of a regiment of soldiers. Experience alone had to teach that. The old idea was that when a pheasant got away from the guns, and flew maybe for a mile, he was a lost bird. There were usually very good reasons why that estimate was not far out. Maybe an attempt would be made to drive pheasants from the corner of some covert over guns to a wood in the distance that they knew nothing of. The result was often enough good tall shots at pheasants scattering all over the country, and the pent-up wrath of the keeper (if a good one) may be imagined better than described when he observed that all his labour had resulted merely in a squandering of his game for what he regarded as a foolish fad on the part of his master. But these misunderstandings are greatly on the decrease, and the old gorse and blackthorn "rise" is now almost as much disregarded by the good keeper as by the good shooter. In most cases each now aims at the same thing, and all know how it is to be attained. A keeper who is in the fashion of the hour strives to make every bird he puts over the guns as difficult to kill as before his predecessor strove to make each bird as easy to put into the bag as possible.

The generalship of the beat is no light matter, especially where the pheasant coverts are within measurable distance of those of some neighbouring preserves. It has been said that you can drive pheasants to a yard, and one of the best-known preservers in England has declared his ability to drive the whole lot into his own drawing-room. But over-confidence has sometimes been doomed to disappointment, and it is extraordinary what havoc may be made with all "generalship" by the untimely presence of a fox, or even a cat, in a covert. The whole morning may have been spent on sending forward the pheasants into some little outside covert that is to furnish a succession of grand rises in the afternoon, when it is expected that the birds will fly high and strong for the coverts which they have been forced to desert in the morning. The stops have probably all been placed, not too near but near enough, to prevent any birds attempting to regain their own homes by running; and to flying they have a natural objection, especially when they know of an obstruction to their free passage in the form of a line of stops. Suddenly some cock bird sees a fox, and he gives the warning cry, and either rises into a tree or takes the bolder course and faces the stops. If the latter, the covert may empty itself in five minutes, and all "generalship" is so much foolishness, for that day at least. For reasons such as these, the reliance upon one great rising place is rather out of fashion, and the more frequently such places occur during a day's covert-shooting the more highly is the general result appreciated.

The principle is to drive the birds, on foot, away from their own home, in order that when they are flushed they may come back to it over a line or a double line of guns, preferably having the wind in their favour as they go home. The disadvantage of this method is that the birds can only be made use of once in the day. The advantage is that they fly with confidence homewards, and can be made to fly high by the presence of a line of stops between themselves and their homes. Some rising places are situated in such advantageous positions that the flushing party may enter and advance with their backs to the line of guns, safely trusting to the homing instinct of the birds, risen with their heads pointing away from home, to turn them round and take them with a curl over the guns. This, when it can be safely done, leads to higher and more difficult shots than any other method. But it is by no means always safe, and may lead to driving the birds in every possible direction except the right one.

The usual and the safer plan is, having penned up your birds in some safe rest by means of stops, to send round the beaters and turn the heads of the pheasants homewards, trusting to their sight of the shooters and their loaders and retrievers and the stops to make them rise high. But all this represents the domestic side of pheasant shooting, and obviously applies when the birds are more at home in one covert than in another. Later on in the season they get to know a great deal of country, and it is then very difficult to form plans for them.

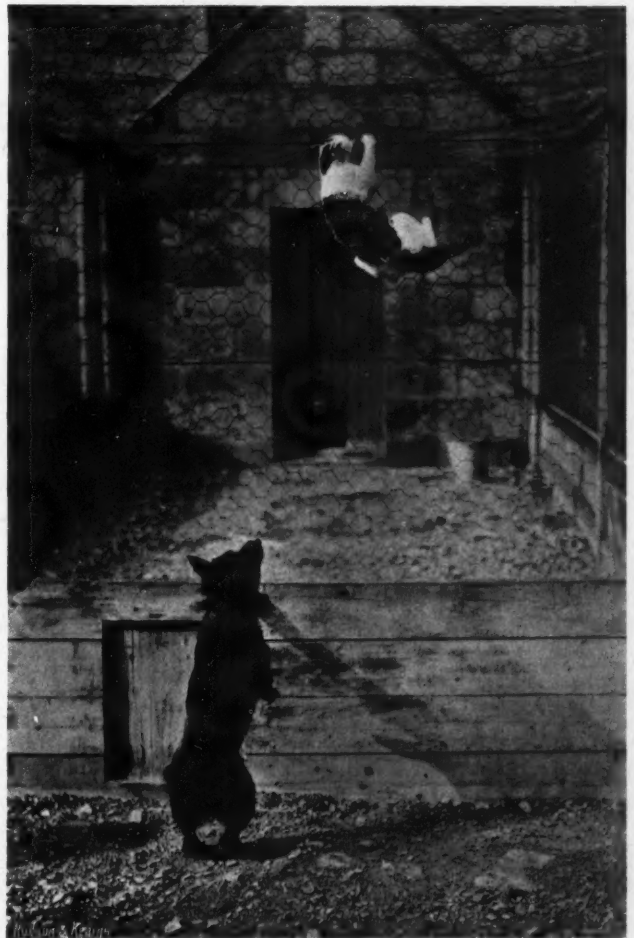
What they will do one day in December is exactly the reverse of what they will do another day in January. At this season of the year it does not do to be too confident that the covert which the keeper regards as their home has any greater charms for them than some other, towards which they will point in spite of every rule to the contrary. They break away at the flanks in the most provoking manner, and neither stops nor flags seem to have any effect on them, except to make them rise before they ought to rise, and fly high in the wrong direction, just as if the Badminton Library had never been written for their higher education.

But when everything has gone exactly as it was required to go, when the guns are in line and the pheasants, in singles, in doubles, in tens, and in clouds, are heading straight for home, high for the first line of guns, and higher still for the second, then come out the differences in the various shooters' education and temperament. One man who has learnt the art of swing and the practice of holding ahead (which so many people erroneously imagine to be two distinct operations) may be stopping the single birds beautifully and pulling down a right and left in the neatest style; but when they come thick his temperament

may fail him just in the nick of time, and his shooting then goes all abroad. Another man who has been aligning them from afar off, and jerking up his gun as he pulls trigger with the most satisfactory results, suddenly finds a crowd of birds over him and around him, and he has now no time for the aligning method, and he lets off gunpowder and language with the utmost impartiality, as the result of being hurried up a little.

A third man began perhaps badly; he shot a bit too far in front for his first bird, a bit too far behind for his second, but then he gets their length, and every bird with rare monotonousness throws back its head and drops its legs as it comes within the particular angle that this gunner affects; bird after bird arrives exactly at the same spot only to meet exactly the fate of his predecessor in precisely the same way; it seems that not a bird can get by. All down the first line every shooter may be getting precisely the same kind of shot, and most of them are probably making fair work of it, but away behind there is perhaps some missing. The birds there are sailing over with motionless wings, slightly downwards towards the distant covert, and perhaps affecting that difficult curl which results from a slight change of direction after passing the first line of guns.

It is not the height, and it is not the speed, which tries the shooters, but the deception in both. Especially is the speed of a pheasant on motionless wings deceptive; but neither of these is the cause of the most missing. Numbers beat some of the guns; men who would be capable of bringing to bag nearly every bird if they came with intervals between get arm-weary when the shooting is as fast as they can fire and change guns, and then they shoot behind everything, and are for the moment entirely demoralised, and do not know where they do



C. Reid.

SOLD AGAIN.

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shoot. For such occasions there is but one good rule—it is never to be in a hurry (if you can help it), and to let twenty go by un-hot at rather than shoot before being ready.

The satisfaction of the game preserver is at least equal when the birds happen to prove just a little bit too much for the guns as when the reverse is the case. The pheasants have in either case fulfilled their allotted task, and have given the guns enough to do to stop them. They have tested the skill of the men and the quality of the powder, and every bird has been hit or missed in full view of the whole double line and of the whole strength of the keepers besides. Many is the shot that has fixed itself in the minds of the latter as something out of the common for future discussion. There is something to look at, at any rate, when a gallant old cock sails down between both lines, drawing fire from each, and gets off scot-free; it is just the occasion when the old sarcasm on pheasant shooting does not apply. "Up gets a sovereign, off goes a penny, and down comes half-a-crown" ceased to have a meaning when shooters gave up the practice of surrounding the gorse belts and shooting at the birds as they rose.

The moderns have at least taught the pheasant how to fly, and they have made his killing the most artistic form of sport with the gun; but perhaps not the most difficult even when the rise has been 200yds. from the first line of guns and the pheasants have the full benefit of the wind to help them to beat the shooters. Still it is all pace, and nothing but pace, with the pheasant; the variety of pace by which some other game beats the shooters is almost absent. They want a good deal of knack, and there are some few hints I am able, and hope to be permitted, to give at some future time.

ARGUS OLIVE.



## THE COLONIAL COLLEGE AT HOLLESLEY BAY.

SOME time since, in the course of an address to the Society of Arts, I strongly advocated the better equipment of the Gentleman-Emigrant. I had returned from a visit to various scenes of colonial life with a keen remembrance of the hopeless incompetence of many "new chums," otherwise capital fellows, who had elected to lead that life. Though sprung from parents of position and means, they had been shunted to the colonies direct from the public schools, and, though accustomed to a life of comfort, were rapidly degenerating into barbarism, for the simple reason that they were incapable of performing the elementary duties of pioneer life. Many years had been devoted to filling them up with information about matters they would hasten to forget on leaving school; but not a year—not a month even—had been spared to put them in practical contact with the work-a-day problems of the colonist.

And so I had found that ignorance begot failure, and failure discontent, and discontent often brought degradation and ruin. I saw this incompetence everywhere. The house, the fence, the waggon, the gates—all were shouting, and shouting in vain, for simple carpentry.

The land, the crops, the fruit trees eloquently proclaimed their need of the A B C of agriculture. The herds and flocks, the pigs and poultry, were alike the victims of crass incapacity. Of veterinary knowledge I could find no trace; of dairy skill, no evidence; of irrigation or well-sinking or surveying or horse shoeing, never a sign of ability; and though many of them lived a hundred miles from a doctor, I scarcely met one who knew

how to render "first aid" in an injury to bone or muscle, who could tell you what to do in any case of disease, who could make a useful attempt to restore the apparently drowned, or treat a burn or a wound on any hopeful method. Surely such gentlemen-emigrants could only have been sent out there to fail and starve and die.

And this is why I can so fully appreciate the work which is done by the Colonial College at Hollesley Bay, in Suffolk, a work which has been now going steadily on since 1887, and has become not only a training school of the most practical kind, but at the same time a link between its old students scattered through all the colonies and an "Exchange" of the valuable knowledge acquired in the school of many experiences.

As soon as I heard of it I visited the college, and ever since have closely watched its career, and the more I see of it the more am I impressed by its importance, not only as a centre of practical instruction in the oldest and still, as I think, the most attractive of the arts, but also as a world-wide organisation, having a little army of correspondents in every colony, receiving

fresh blood by every mail in evidence from its old students of the needs of colonial life, and being regarded by them in return as still their fostering Alma Mater.

Leaving the rail at Woodbridge, in Suffolk, you drive for some miles across a breezy moorland—all heather and pines—and then, in the midst of its farm of 2,500 acres, you find the Colonial College lying on the side of a hill which slopes away to the sea at Hollesley Bay. The handsome main building—some 300ft. in length—is chiefly devoted to offices, lecture-rooms, museums, library, students' studies and bedrooms, and the director's and masters' residences. A little lower down the hill are the carpenters', joiners', harness-makers', wheelwrights', and farriers' workshops and forges; on a gentle slope across the brook there stands the model dairy, for which fifty cows provide employment; beyond this are farm stables, cattle sheds, pig-styes, and barns, while landward spread some twenty acres of experimental gardens. Here and there, too, are the sheds and arrangements necessary for practical building, agricultural engineering, brick-making, and many a need in one or other of

the many phases of pioneer life. Ten minutes or so away, on the banks of the estuary of the Alde, you notice the college boat-house with its little fleet of boats—no unimportant preparation for those new countries where the rivers are often the best, sometimes the only, high roads.

The Resident: Director, Mr. Robert Johnson, is the virtual founder of the college, and naturally a model cicerone. I believe that he could make the most inveterate Cockney glow



THE WEST FRONT.

with colonial enthusiasm; and I, coming already with both the enthusiasm and the experience, could test the truth of his comments and the value of his great enterprise. Here, for example, as we stand in one of the class-rooms and talk of the many shifts one is put to in colonial life, I am led into some of the less "showy" features of the college, for I see how the young fellows learn how to erect for themselves comfortable, rain-tight homes, from the simplest shelter to timber houses of sawn lumber; how they master the uses of frame and truss and shore and the insidiousness of cross-strain; how they learn here to sink a well, test the water, warm their homes on the cheapest and most effective plan, repair their boots, and dose themselves usefully when out of sorts.

There are many class-rooms, but no one class-room is in itself complete. Its invariable annexe is the farm, the garden, the dairy, the soil, the flock, the herd, or the stud. Though geology enables the students to recognise and understand soils, their tillage, their drainage, irrigation, and cultivation are mastered in the open air. Though botany opens up to them a



long list of plants and their characteristics, the life and doings of the plant—its germination, functions, and maturity—are learnt by observation and experiment in the garden and the field, and this teaches them cultivation of vegetables, fruits, grains, roots, fodder crops, and grasses. It is almost impossible to exaggerate the importance of any one of them—take, at random, for example, the identification of seeds or the production of dairy pastures. So, too, with agricultural chemistry, whether it apply to manures, organic and inorganic, and their precise relation to various soils, or, in the dairy, to the nature, properties, and changes of milk, butter, and cheese. Here in this classroom are the dry bones (literally, for here stands the skeleton of a horse!), the book-learning of anatomy and physiology, and the materia medica of veterinary science; but outside there, in that sun-bathed meadow, I can see a group of students studying from life their dumb but beautiful patients—the Suffolk Punches, the black-faced sheep, or the red-poll cattle. From the lives of more than a thousand animals they acquire a practical knowledge in stall, meadow, and fold, of the care of live stock in health and disease. Practical instruction, too, in the life and health of the emigrant himself is carried on by the doctor. Lessons are given in "first aid" and "ambulance" work



THE CARPENTERS SHOP.

wine-making, surveying, engineering, mining, assaying, veterinary practice, and the business of estate agency. But they not only come from everywhere—they go everywhere. Roughly, Canada absorbs about 25 per cent. of the total, the United States 17 per cent., New Zealand 16, South Africa 14, the Australias 12, and India and Ceylon about 8 per cent. Nor are these men lost to the college. Every term in *Colonia*, its magazine, there are pages of correspondence from these old pupils in every part of the Empire. I know nothing more valuable—this plain unvarnished tale of actual experience in many callings, written, too, with a remembrance of the system of the college and the aim it has. The Government itself does not possess in all its libraries of blue-books, "circulars," and reports, information so valuable to the intending emigrant and to those who are guiding his steps. Little wonder that I heard Lord Knutsford, when Secretary of State for the Colonies, express the Government's appreciation of this work of sending out such ideal colonists, or that Sir Edward Braddon told me that the good work being done here was also good work for the Empire.

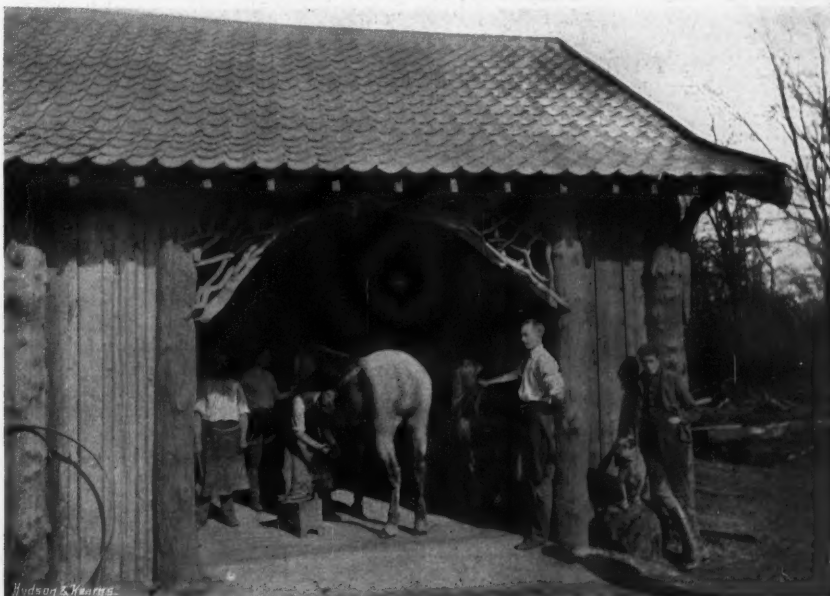
Let me recall a glimpse or two that I had when walking about the college estate. Here is a nursery, containing a great variety of trees, and it is the duty of those students who require this special knowledge to tend and watch them. Later on I came across the practical result of the interest inspired by the nursery. Across a shallow stream there lay a huge ash



BARKING OAK TIMBER.

generally—such as the stopping of bleeding, the treatment of fractures and sprains, fits, bites, scalds, sunstroke, contagious and infectious diseases, and simple domestic medicine generally—all of the very highest value to the colonist in his comparative isolation. Many lives and limbs have already been saved by such knowledge, and its importance is beyond words; and, lastly, the chemistry of the class-room is carried to the laboratory, where, with three furnaces in full blast, samples of gold quartz, galena, and other metalliferous ores are assayed, a circumstance which has enabled not a few old students to find on their ranches and sheep runs an unsuspected mine of wealth.

These Colonial College students come from everywhere—from Oxford and Cambridge, from Woolwich and Sandhurst, from Winchester, Eton and Harrow, Rugby, Charterhouse, Sherborne, Uppingham, and Haileybury, and a hundred other schools. The best evidence of what they learn may be found in what old students are now doing. It is a long list, and I will only give the half of it. Many are ranching—horse and cattle; many, too, are running sheep, and more are farming on general lines. Dairy, ostrich, and poultry farming occupy others; grape, orange, fruit, and flower growing are supporting not a few; cocoa, tea, coffee, and indigo planting repay many; while estate management has absorbed others. Forestry attracts an increasing number, and special departments in the college have led former generations of students to find their life-work in



THE SHOEING FORGE.

tree; all the top wood had been cut off in suitable lengths, and lay ready for being turned into faggots. The vast limbs, which had thrown long shadows for I do not know how many years across the neighbouring ground, had all been cut into proper lengths, and only awaited lumbering up. I drew Mr. Johnson's attention to it. "Yes," he replied, "another specimen of our results. This tree was blown down in one of the recent gales, and three or four of the students begged me to allow them to prepare it entirely by themselves. I consented, and now you see before you each part of the tree properly cut, ready for various uses, and practically done as well as if an experienced woodman had been at work."

Another glimpse. On arriving at the shoeing forge I found a group of students in the act of shoeing, with the shoes they had just made, two noble specimens of the Suffolk Punch. Entering a door on the left, I passed into the blacksmiths' shop, and again found several students busily at work, some making horse-shoes, some iron rails and standards, and others fashioning details of waggon work. A few steps further on led me to the carpenters' shop, where one student was completing a pair of shafts, another a field gate, and a third a bench. Then I walked up the shady lane to the dairy, a large, airy, red brick and tile building, the very embodiment—as it should be—of freshness and cleanliness. A considerable variety of machines were in use—a multiplicity clearly intended to be educational, as the students might be called upon to use any one of them. For though the dairy is a working one, it is also a dairy school. And here students were, or had just been, making butter and

cheese, some 200lb. of the former being turned out by them every week. A fine herd of fifty cows, of various breeds, provides the raw material, and the students learn to milk well. Not one but scores of letters from "old boys" run in this vein: "The milking I learnt is very useful. It is reckoned that only about 1 per cent. of 'new chums' who come out here are able to milk."

Yet a third glimpse. Passing beyond the dairy I reach the poultry farm, with its fowl-houses and large wire runs and latest up-to-date contrivances. Here, too, are young "colonials" working about the houses and shifting runs.

Near by, quietly, but not the less busily, feeding on turnips, is a large flock of several hundred sheep, with those black faces and black legs so dear to the East Anglian; the other varieties are also present. The old shepherd has two students in his pocket, as it were. Passing on, I enter a field where a thrashing machine is in full hum, with the usual posse of active students about it; and so down the lane into the experimental gardens, with their thousands of trees, bushes,



MAKING BUTTER.

plants, and, especially noteworthy, a magnificent collection of representative conifers, more than 200 in number.

And so the day wore on until the sky flushed red behind the pine woods which divide the rich lands of the college from the heather moorlands I had crossed in the morning. As we trudged back the sun sank behind the purpling fields, and we crossed lush meadows and passed along a winding avenue of pollarded willows until the twinkling of a hundred lights brought us to the college itself, and a long day spent in the open country and bracing sea breeze came to an end in college hospitality worthy of its colonial name.

A. MONTEFIORE BRICE.



WE are apt to consider the plumber rather as a working man than as an artist, and, indeed, at the present time leadwork has lost much of the dignity lent to it by the admirable designs used in bygone times, when even a pump-head was often made so beautifully as to be worthy of preservation in a museum.

The ease with which lead can be manipulated is probably the reason that even in remote antiquity it was employed not only for useful but also for ornamental purposes. It has the rare merit of durability, although, owing to its pliable nature, very large pieces of Greek and Roman leadwork have not come down to us. The writer remembers many years ago attending an excavation in Rome at which several big specimens of leadwork were discovered, but they had been flattened in the course of ages to the consistency of pancakes, though still retaining evidences of having once upon a time been either fair-sized busts or vases.

In remote antiquity lead was used for the reproduction of small images of the gods, which, judging by those preserved in the National Museum of Naples and of the Lateran at Rome, were coated with paint. At Nineveh, and among the ruins of famous classical cities in various parts of Asia Minor, leaden images, jars, and pieces of elaborately decorated water pipes have been found in great quantities. It seems, however,

according to Sir G. Wilkinson, that lead was not greatly used in Egypt, excepting for the inlaying of temple doors, coffins, and furniture, and as small statues of the popular gods Osiris and Anubis.

At a very early age the plumber's trade included that of coffin-making, and there is scarcely an ancient people which did not employ this metal in the manufacture of "man's last home."

Many of these leaden coffins were superbly decorated with intricate patterns; indeed, even the effigy of the dead and various pagan or Christian emblems figured upon the lid. Among the finest specimens is one in the Temple Church, and there are two others at Lewes, in Sussex, with exquisite cross-work patterns on them. One relating to Sir William de Warren is dated 1088, and the other to his wife, a daughter of the Conqueror, bears a date three years earlier. At the heads are the two names of their ancient inmates, Wilhemn and Gondrada. In Italy there are a great number of elaborate lead coffins, and a few years back I remember to have seen in the Church of Santa Maria di Monserrato, Rome, the two fine leaden coffins containing the remains of the famous Borgia Popes, Calixtus III. and Alexander VI. They had rested in the vestibule since their removal from the old Basilica of St. Peter's, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, but were, at the expense of the Spanish Government, encased in a suitable monument some ten or fifteen years ago.



Greek and Roman gardens differed in most respects from our own. Almost every house in Ancient Greece had its garden, that is to say, a sort of terrace on which cypresses and oleanders grew in artificial beds, containing a sufficiency of earth to give them nourishment. The Greeks, however, seem to have had no idea of flower beds, in our sense of the term, but cultivated their bulbs, rose bushes, and other decorative and flowering plants in pots, many of which undoubtedly were made of lead and highly decorated. Homer gives us in the "Odyssey" a fine description of the gardens of Alcinoüs, which seem to have been a combination of orchard and flower garden, together with the usual architectural garden which the Greeks considered perfection. But the Romans, who evidently derived the arrangement of their gardens from the Greeks and Etruscans, enlarged upon the original scheme, and in classical times Italy might well have been described as one vast garden, extending over the whole of the civilised part of the Peninsula. Some of the Roman gardens, those of Pompey, Lucullus, and Mæcenas, were of enormous



THE RAPE OF THE SABINES AT PAINSHILL.

(After Giovanni da Bologna.)

size, and included meadows through which artificial rivulets were made to flow, and important and well-organised vegetable and fruit gardens. But the decoration of a classical garden was probably much too artificially elaborate for our taste. In some of these old Roman gardens there were as many as 4,000 or 5,000 statues, mostly of white marble or bronze, and the finest works of ancient sculpture now preserved in the Vatican and other museums originally formed part of the marble Olympus of some classical garden. Leadwork was plentifully used by the Romans for vases, water troughs, and also, occasionally, for statuary purposes, but marble and bronze, being then, as now, comparatively cheap in Italy, were naturally preferred to the inferior material, which does not produce the same effect in a brilliant Southern atmosphere that it does in our own, which, with all its faults of changeableness, is nevertheless exceptionally soft and silvery.

At the time of the Italian Renaissance, that is to say, about the beginning of the fifteenth century, the Italians were seized with a rage for building



LEADWORK AT DRAYTON HOUSE.

villas after classical models, and leadwork reappears in their long and stately walks and formal alleys. Ficoroni, in his book "*De'Piombi Antichi*," mentions some important lead works modelled after the antique as having been set up in the sixteenth century in the gardens of the Villa Ludovisi, and of other celebrated villas in and near Rome, as well as at Florence and Genoa, but very few of them are now in existence.

France took up ornamental gardening some fifty years before we began to turn our attention to the subject on a large scale. Outdoor gardens, however, were, in those times of almost incessant civil war, very small. Caylus, in his curious book on leadwork, tells us of the existence in France of leaden statues at an early period, but observes that they were exceedingly rare, and it is doubtful whether leaden statues were ever introduced into French gardening on any considerable scale until quite the reign of Louis XIV., when reproductions of celebrated statues in the Italian museums and galleries, and some fine original works were manufactured, and thus began to make their appearance even in the suburban villa gardens of Paris. It was unquestionably the abundant use of lead in the gardens at Versailles which set the fashion of the employment of this material for garden decoration in this country. Under Louis XIV. François Girardon designed and executed the enormous fountain of the Pyramid, which is altogether the most elaborate composition ever executed in lead, and consists of a basin in which sport three life-sized tritons, rising from a pedestal. Above these is a circular basin, and above it again three others, diminishing in size, each supported from the one below round the rim by little tritons and dolphins, whereas the last is entrusted to a group of



ANDROMEDA AT MELBOURNE.

lobsters. In the Versailles Gardens are, it seems, many other leaden statues, but most of them have been painted over.

The illustrations represent various choice remains of old leadwork which still remain, including the Rape of the Sabines, which is in the grounds of Painshill, Cobham, a figure of Mercury at Melbourne, an Andromeda, Melbourne also, and a faun at Peover Hall, near Knutsford. The group of the Rape of the Sabines is, needless to say, an admirable reproduction of the magnificent work by Giovanni da Bologna in the Loggia of the Uffizzi at Florence. The exceeding skill with which so difficult a subject has been treated, and the vigour of the outline, have always rendered this particular group, whether in marble,

bronze, or lead, a popular subject for outdoor decoration. The Mercury, on the other hand, which is very suggestive in its pose of Mr. Gilbert's Eros on the fountain at Piccadilly Circus, is in all probability a leaden replica of a statue of Mercury by Giovanni da Bologna, which is mentioned among the collection of statues which for some twenty years in the first half of the seventeenth century adorned York Terrace, Strand, and which were included among the art treasures belonging to Steenie, Duke of Buckingham. The original statue is lost, but there are several drawings of it extant.

Drayton House, with its quaint old English garden by way



A FAUN AT PEOVER HALL, CHESHIRE.

of foreground, forms a scene which can only be enjoyed in England. It may not possess the architectural magnificence or the luxuriance of an Italian villa and garden, but where can anything comparable to it be found in its reposeful air of comfort? The Italian villa is altogether too romantic for our matter-of-fact days, and is better suited to an age and climate where serenades are possible and stately pavones can be danced by the light of the moon. So, too, the leaden vases which ornament the terraces of Drayton, exquisite in design, their silvery hues blend with the soft English atmospheric effects far better than would the cold garishness of marble, and prove once more that leadwork should find its place in every well arranged English garden.

RICHARD DAVEY.

(To be continued.)

## A BOOK OF THE DAY.

PERHAPS something in the nature of an apologetic foreword is due from him who makes "*The Heart of the Dancer*" (Hutchinson), by Mr. Percy White, a book of the week. To start with, there are many other books, nearly a revolving bookcase full of them, calling for attention which they probably will not receive. Then there is "*Parson Lord—and other stories*," by Miss Mary E. Wilkins, which is really a volume of far greater importance. But—"and other stories"—there is the rub. If the object be, as it should be, to make the review no less interesting than the book itself, or at the worst a readable and amusing article, a sheaf of short stories are troublesome. They are, in the nature of things, lacking in coherent interest. The last and the best of the excuses are, firstly, that a number of the books of the spring season which were hoped for most earnestly, notably that from the pen of Miss Ellen Fowler, are hanging fire; and, secondly, also lastly, that "*The Heart of the Dancer*" is, to put matters plainly, a right down good story. Mr. White may not be, in fact he is not, a complete master of a polished style. But he possesses the essential



qualities of a tale-spinner. He can construct. He has a story to tell which grips the attention in a firm, almost in a feverish, grasp from page to page; the reader cannot guess, as he goes on reading, how things are going, to use a horrible Americanism, "to eventuate," the characters, even when they claim sympathy least, are human and alive; then there is enough of half-suppressed actuality and topical allusion to call to mind one or two recent scandals of minor importance. All this tends to make him or her who reads share in the life of the book. In producing that sense of reality Mr. Percy White has covered a multitude of sins, which can be overcome; he has shown in fact that he possesses that art of story-telling which is born in a man, which no amount of culture or practice can attain.

Some years ago, in the University College of Bangor in North Wales (the same cathedral city in which an "old person," mooted to have been the Bishop, "tore off his boots in his anger"), there arose a local scandal. There was a hostel for lady students, and there arose a great question whether one of the male professors had kissed a lady student, or whether the lady student had kissed the professor, or whether there had been a kiss, or an interchange of kisses, at all. Of course it really did not matter much one way or the other, but at the time the good folks of Bangor were clearly of opinion that it was a question of supreme importance. But I cannot help thinking that Mr. Percy White had heard of this storm in a teacup when he evolved Althea Westbrooke from his inner consciousness. For Althea was a pupil, not in a University College, but in a Training College, when Col. Sancroft, then a dashing subaltern, made love to her.

After the manner of soldiers, and for that matter of sailors also, young Sancroft loved and rode away; in other words, he went off to his duty in India, and he hardly wasted a thought upon the maiden. She, on the other hand, was very properly expelled from the highly respectable training college, and devoted herself to the music-hall stage (of the highest class) with great success. Our real story opens in fact at a time when Althea was at the height of her fame at the "Empyrean" (not a bad name for a new music hall by the way), and when Ronald Dodd, a decadent poet admirably drawn, had written for her the verses entitled "Votogia," which placed her at the very pinnacle of success. This triumph it was that caused Althea to make the acquaintance of the parents and the sister of the Decadent, and to be asked to stay with them in the country. Now Sir Francis Dodd, M.P., father of the Decadent, was a good-hearted parvenu, a Member of Parliament, chairman of a mortgage company with which the estates of Sir Rupert Sancroft were pledged, and vic' or over the said Sir Rupert in a recent parliamentary election. Moreover, he owned the adjoining estate, and flaunted a flag which gave much annoyance to Sir Rupert. Nevertheless, when Colonel Sancroft came home from great exploits in a frontier war, while Althea was visiting the Dodds, there had to be celebrations, and these celebrations, together with the frigid demeanour of Sir Rupert, are described in a masterly way in the following passage:

There were rumours of martial music, and the flash of local steel in the still hot air; the picked company of the Southshire Volunteers was drawn up before the station, and behind the guard of honour a burly broad-shouldered country crowd was patiently perspiring in the sun. On the platform were grouped the municipal authorities ready with an address; among them Sir Francis Dodd, in uniform as honorary colonel of the "Southshires," was a prominent figure. In the midst of a group of officers in multi from the Olchester Barracks stood Sir Rupert Sancroft, pale with pride and excitement.

The carriages of the country families had been honoured with a place outside the low palings of the railway station, and from her seat in the Dodds' landau Althea Westbrooke's quick eye missed little of the stir and bustle on the platform. She had seen the meeting of the baronets, and watched the ominous stiffening of Sir Rupert's back. The happy sense of worldly superiority soothes human rancour in dealing with the less lucky, and Sir Francis tried hard to overlook the proud resentment of his neighbour, which he had schooled himself to regard as involuntary homage paid to his own victory. His mistake was to expect equal magnanimity in a vanquished political opponent. Moreover, the whole country declared Sir Rupert's implacable attitude "meant nothing."

The moment seemed to Sir Francis suited for gracious condescension on his part.

"Like the rest of the world, Sir Rupert," said he, "I have read of your son's splendid feat with admiration. The whole country is proud of him, and I offer you my most respectful congratulations."

"I have the honour to thank you," replied Sir Rupert, frigidly inclining his head. In the chilly silence which followed, the young swallows resting on the telegraph wires could be heard twittering petulantly. Fortunately the excellent opinion which Sir Francis entertained of himself would not allow him to admit that anyone would purposely snub him, and so he attributed Sir Rupert's ungenial speech to manner rather than animosity.

But the tramp of a squad of the "First Southshires" through the waiting room to the platform to make a better military display dispelled the little cloud.

"I am afraid we shall never thaw Sir Rupert," said Sybil Dodd, who had also interpreted the scene with feminine intelligence.

"We have tried our best," said her mother; "more we cannot do. Sir Rupert cannot forgive us for winning the seat."



LEADWORK: MERCURY AT MELBOURNE.

If, however, the Dodds could not thaw Sir Rupert, Althea could thaw Colonel Sancroft up to a point; and the story of their love is really the theme of the book. Sancroft was ready, perhaps even anxious, to forget the past. His profession was his bride, and he really knew it all the time. But circumstances conspired to make Althea strain every nerve to fascinate him, and to compel her to fall in love with him anew. She was surrounded with a coterie of journalists and actors, poor, elegant creatures all of them; the manliness of Sancroft appeared the more magnificent by contrast. Then the Decadent proposed, with the result that Sancroft appeared to be finer than ever. Next "Aunt" Dormer, a duenna really, and not an aunt at all, must needs remonstrate, and after that it followed of necessity that Althea must fling herself under Sancroft's feet. He yielded, as almost any other man would have yielded in the like position, but there came the call of duty to service in India, and he left Althea in Paris forlorn.

In passing, there is an incident at this part of the story, the irruption of Ronald Dodd with a revolver which does not, in my judgment, help on the action.

So Sancroft went to India, where he played the hero to a marvel, and Althea, disillusioned but philosophical, returned to England; and for her the Duchess of Southshire, a great lady, who is very amusingly drawn, determined to make a match with the Prince de Monteverro, son of an American wife of an Italian piano, and therefore very modern indeed. How it was brought about, and how Althea came to exercise a power akin to witchcraft over every man she encountered, may readily be gathered from this passage, which records a scene at an evening party given by

the Duchess of Southshire in order to bring Althea and the Prince together:

Althea spoke a few words to the Duchess, and in a moment or two the whisper spread across the crowded rooms that she was going to sing. A grand piano was moved to the centre of the room; two violins and a pianist were pressed from the band, and a great circle was formed. The dance, which on the stage filled up the space between the verses, was impossible, but Althea sang with all her soul. Prince Monteverro, who had an Italian's love for sensuous melody, stood rapt beside the Duchess, with two little spots of colour on his pale cheeks and fire in his eyes.

Althea's singing dispelled languor as a lark awakes the life of a meadow in spring. The audience, lifted out of itself by the swift enchantment of her voice, forgot even its extreme smartness in its acute pleasure, and applauded with unrestrained approval and delight.

"And that's an Englishwoman!" exclaimed Prince Ferdinand, with sparkling eyes.

"As a matter of fact, I believe she is Welsh," said the Duchess, as the Duke of Southshire, whom the singing had brought on the scene, advanced, and

said many gracious things to Althea, smiling benignly the while, like the amiable nobleman he was.

"Whatever she is," said the Prince, "Miss Westbrook has made me understand what the darkness feels when the nightingale sings."

Althea, moving through the congratulatory throng, had now reached the Duchess.

"Thank you, Miss Westbrook, for lifting our heavy feet off the dull earth for a moment," said the Duchess, who loved music, and felt it. "Prince Ferdinand has paid your singing the most touching homage."

"Please tell me what it was," said Althea, enjoying the effect that he voice had produced, as all sincere artists must.

"The Prince said that you made him understand what the dark feels when the nightingale sings. Is not that a charming compliment?"

"It's a simple fact," said the Prince. "Ah! Miss Westbrook, you should hear our nightingales at Monteverro in May, when the gardens are heavy with scents, and the darkness with song, and you wouldn't laugh at me."

And the Prince spoke and looked as a man who had never been bored in all his life. The Duchess, who knew him well, noting the change, was full of wonder.

So, in due course, Althea consented to marry the Prince, and they went away to his beautiful place in Italy, and here, to my mind, the true climax of the story is reached. But there has to be much more. Just as Althea is forgetting her love for Sancroft in the joy of motherhood, the Prince, sufficiently Italian to be wildly jealous, and enough of a shrewd American to see that he is making a fool of himself, hears from his cousin Sanchiarro, that one De Bouteville has spoken disparagingly of the Princess in connection with Sancroft. Now De Bouteville was a Parisian decadent, a friend of Ronald Dodd, and worse than he. So a duel follows, in which both are wounded, and, on the whole, I do not remember to have seen a duel described better in recent fiction.

The seconds met and bowed with ceremony; the combatants saluted; the doctor drew a small case from his pocket and placed it carefully on the step of the stile. After a whispered conversation Sanchiarro approached his cousin. "We have the choice of ground; take the higher, keep cool, and don't waste your strength," said he.

The swords were produced—perfectly balanced twin-blades of blue steel—and handed in turn to the combatants, who, meanwhile, had removed their coats and waistcoats, and faced each other in light silk shirts, of which the folds stirred in the faint morning breeze. "Are you ready, messieurs?" cried the Frenchman with the black beard. The antagonists advanced a step nearer, but with lowered points. "Tirez." The steel clashed with a musical ring. Click, click! rang the blades as each felt the strength of the other's wrist. Suddenly the Prince made a fierce lunge, which De Bouteville parried. Then thrust and riposte followed quickly, the Frenchman acting on the defensive, the Prince fiercely attacking.

"He will tire our man down," muttered Sesto to his comrade. But before he had uttered the words, a thrust from the Prince entered the folds of De Bouteville's shirt, who, springing back to avoid the point, slipped

on one knee. The seconds intervened. The assault had lasted two minutes. Both men were breathing heavily; the Prince's face was white, his mouth set, his eyes dilated; De Bouteville had felt the blade of the sword pass along his body like a cold, thin, murderous snake. He felt the duel was a very different affair from the little friendly meetings with adversaries equally anxious not to be hurt. His anxious seconds, eager for any excuse to close the encounter, examined the chest of their principal; but the Prince's sword had not drawn blood, although a thin streak became visible on the Prince's left hand. "Your principal is hurt, monsieur," said the second to Sanchiarro, "and I am of opinion that, honour now being satisfied, the encounter should cease." Sanchiarro glanced at the Prince's hand. "It is a scratch," said the Prince in French to his cousin, "and I must beg you to make these gentlemen understand that this is not a meeting *a la mode de Paris*." The Frenchmen heard and understood. There was a slight pause, during which the cicadas in the grass could be heard chirruping, and then the same voice, this time with a nervous vibration, cried: "Are you ready, gentlemen—*tirez!*" Again the combatants sprang to the attack, and this time De Bouteville knew that he was fighting for his life. There was no mistaking the devil that sat in his opponent's eye. The blades followed each other in narrowest circles of danger; this time the Frenchman attacked with all his craft, skill, and strength. But the Prince met him with reckless fury, and, refusing to recede, the two men came too near for thrust in tierce or carde, and just as the seconds were hurrying to separate them De Bouteville's point struck the Prince full in the chest, whilst almost simultaneously he received a savage counter-thrust in the abdomen. The Prince staggered back into his cousin's arms with a gasp, whilst De Bouteville, dazed with the shock of his own wound, yet scarcely conscious he was hurt, remained standing, a red stain on his thin blade.

In a moment the doctor was on the spot. They placed the Prince on the turf on a coat. From a deep puncture in his chest bright drops of blood were oozing, and the froth on his lips was tinged with blood. The Prince opened his eyes, looked up at the doctor and said: "I can't breathe." The doctor made no reply.

So the poor young Prince, an amiable gentleman if not a clever one, dies, and nobody so much as takes the trouble to ask what happens to De Bouteville, and Althea becomes very religious, and Sancroft comes back to marry the sister of the decadent poet and her money. In fact, save for the death of the Prince of Monteverro, the end of the book is respectable, even to the verge of dullness. But I would guard myself emphatically against a statement that the story as a whole is dull. It is nothing of the kind, but Althea, while she is pure-souled but unconventional, is distinctly better company than Althea the Princess.

The great merit of the book is that all the characters live. There is hardly one of us who has not met Sir Rupert, the proud and poor baronet; Sir Francis, the innocently pompous and purse-proud parvenu; Sancroft the gallant soldier; Ronald Dodd, the decadent poet; "Aunt" Dormer, the duenna; Althea, we may not all have encountered, which may not be altogether a bad thing; but Althea is very real, very womanly, and very beguiling for all that. An interesting book—that is the verdict.

## THE DECADENCE OF THE DONKEY.

THAT most useful beast of burden, the donkey, has been woefully neglected in this country for many years past.

Why this has been so is a matter for considerable conjecture, but it is a fact that the thousands of these animals struggling between the shafts of the costers' barrows in towns and cities, or plodding more leisurely along the rough country lanes, are very far from being typical of the race, and not to be compared in any way with the fine animals of France and Spain, which frequently average from 13h. to 15h. in height. The



"THE MOTHER AND CHILD WERE THERE."

majority of the donkeys at work in this country at the present day are born and bred in Ireland, whence we import between 100,000 and 200,000 annually, figures which show that the animal plays no mean part in Hibernian finances. Notwithstanding this, no attempt appears to have been made to raise or improve the breed of the animal, which is not likely to increase

either in size or strength on the meagre diet which the Irish peasant is able to afford it.

Major Leonard, a transport officer of nearly twenty years' standing, says: "The establishment of breeding studs and the greater employment of the donkey as a transport animal are well worthy of the attention of the military authorities," and amongst other reasons mentions that it can carry a pack of over 1cwt., go for from fifty to sixty hours without water, find its own food, and is less likely to be hit by bullets than a horse. To this may be added the fact that it is impervious to the bite of the tsetse fly and not subject to horse-sickness.

Whatever the military authorities may think on the subject, there should be every incentive to improve the breed of the animal on other grounds. It is far more hardy of constitution than a pony, longer lived, able to draw a proportionately heavier load, and costs less to keep even when "fed up" to the highest possible condition. It is not, perhaps, so fast as the pony, but it is a better "stayer," and that good pace can be got out of donkeys if they are trained to that sort of work is proved by the celebrated Snowball, of Hammersmith fame, and the fast-time performances of many another trotting donkey.

A donkey stud-book would certainly be a desirable institution, but the animals enrolled upon its pages should be good in every point, and not, as too many of our stud horses are, more showy than useful. Town donkeys, probably, would rarely attain or keep the high standard to be expected of their country brethren, as the wretched places in which the majority of them have to exist when not at work, coupled with the killing jar of the hard stones, are enough to knock all pretensions to "class" out of any ass.

The best kind of donkey bred in our own island is, probably, the Welsh, which, thanks to better treatment and food, is of a larger and more vigorous nature than his Irish brother. On the East Coast of England, too, there are many donkeys of sturdy build, but their lack of size discounts their working abilities. The tough little animals shown in the illustrations are of Devonshire birth, and for years have been doing good work over the tremendous hills of that county, the youngster, of course, excepted.

Doubtless if Major Leonard's suggestion attracted Government attention in any way it would give a great impetus to





A WILLING LITTLE WORKER.

donkey-breeding, but there is no need for private enterprise to wait for that unlikely event. A few Spanish asses have, we believe, already been introduced into Ireland, but whether any good has resulted from this course is not yet apparent. The fact remains that, given equality of breed, a donkey is a far more economical possession than a pony.



GIANT VIOLETS.

WE have written before in COUNTRY LIFE about the beautiful Giant Violets, but an exhibit of them at the recent meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society, from Messrs. House and Son, Westbury-on-Trym, recalled them again, one variety named La France receiving an award of merit from the floral committee. These Giant Violets are growing in popularity, and this is not surprising. Giant is an ugly word applied to this sweet flower; it means not infrequently a flower puffed out to abnormal dimensions, distorted, and with a total loss of some precious virtue, maybe of beauty of form and sweet perfume. We know that races of flowers are made hideous through the mistaken efforts of raisers to procure mere novelty at the expense of natural beauty. But the Giant Violet is varied and charming in colour, even richer in fragrance than the wilding of an English wood, large, and held upon a tall stem, so that it becomes for cutting additionally valuable. As this is the time to plant, we may mention that the best varieties are Princess of Wales, California, La France, and Marie Louise (double). Of La France, Mr. House writes: "La France is the latest addition, and is an improvement in many respects on Princess of Wales. It has only recently been possible to arrive at this conclusion, but they have now been fairly tested. La France is more compact in growth, which is a consideration where quantities of flowers are required and the space is limited. It is also a larger flower and of a richer and darker colour. Lastly, it is certainly more free-flowering than the other."

## NOTES UPON VIOLET CULTURE IN FRAMES.

Those who wish to have Violet flowers throughout next winter must begin now, and the writer made notes of some excellent remarks in a recent number of the *Revue Horticole* by the great French Violet grower, M. A. Millet, of Bourg-la-Reine. He mentions that to obtain fine Violets under glass from the end of September to the end of spring, that is throughout the winter, the plants must be carefully prepared. Increase them each year by division in March or April, when they may be planted in the open air in the vegetable garden like common vegetables. Keep them clean throughout the summer, and about August remove the first-formed runners, which, planted as cuttings, will make good tufts in the following year. After this removal the growth of the Violet enters on its most active period. They now grow rapidly and form their hearts and their flowers; a large number of buds accumulate, and from this time onwards continue to develop. It is then that the plants should be put into frames. In the case of Parma Violets this should be done from October 15th to 31st; in the case of other varieties, about November 15th. Remove any runners formed since the main stripping, then, as the plants have been flowering since September and a continuation of the supply is wanted, lift them in small clumps, removing all leaves that are too large or too old, and plant them in frames which have been prepared for this purpose on good ordinary soil, neither too light nor too heavy. The frames should have a southern aspect, and from forty to sixty clumps be planted in each, according as the varieties are of weak or vigorous growth. Thus with very little trouble Violets may be obtained throughout the winter. Give attention, of course, to cleanliness and health, and remove any leaves that turn yellow, thus allowing the air to circulate freely between the plants. Ventilation should be given freely during mild weather. A mat may be thrown over the frames when the weather is severe.

## AN UNINTERRUPTED GATHERING OF VIOLET FLOWERS IN WINTER.

The notes about the succession of flowers are very interesting and important. Some of the varieties are not known here, but others are familiar enough. Those which give greatest satisfaction under glass are as follows: First, Parma

Violets, well treated, produce flowers from October to April, with the exception of the variety Comte de Brazza, which stops blooming from December to the end of January; then come three or four sorts generally known as perpetual four-season Violets; lastly, and above all, our beautiful and large-flowered varieties which bloom from October and November, with a reduced production during December and January, followed by an abundant bloom up to the middle of March or even later. These include such as La France, Dybowski, Princess Beatrice, Comtesse Edmond Dutertre, La Luxonne, and L'Inépisable. To these may be added, if a little more trouble is taken in protecting them than the others, some later-blooming varieties, as the double-flowered rose-coloured Victoria, the double white Belle de Chatenay, and others. We are pleased to see Messrs. House taking up these Violets thoroughly and growing all the most beautiful varieties, both double and single.

## JAPANESE QUINCE AND ITS VARIETIES.

The Pyrus, or Cydonia, japonica is one of those beautiful old garden shrubs that one never tires of; the scarlet flowers, lining every twig almost before winter has flown, possess a beauty that appeals more strongly than in the time of tree-blossom generally, when the rest of the Pyruses are covered with bloom. The type is well known by its rugged growth and adaptability for walls, but there are several varieties of even greater splendour. Cardinalis is of an intense cardinal colour, as the name suggests, and Knap Hill Scarlet is perhaps the most striking of all, its flowers large and of intense colour. Though the paler-coloured forms are pretty, they are far from effective. The white nivalis is distinct, and rosca is tender pink, but against the brilliancy of the scarlet and crimson varieties are not interesting. Mauvei is a good garden shrub, crowded with smaller orange-scarlet flowers, but it is very distinct and free. When the winter is mild the Cydonia will open its flowers long before January is over, and when thus in bloom early it has certainly a greater charm.

## THE SWEET PEA.

This fragrant flower of summer is likely to come more before us this year owing to the celebration of the bi-centenary of its introduction. Of late years, through the efforts of many raisers, Mr. Eckford in particular, the varieties of Sweet Pea have greatly increased, until almost every shade is represented, from the pure white of Sadie Burpee to the intense maroon of Boreatton, Duke of Clarence, or Stanley. A few very charming kinds are Creole, purple, a large flower of wonderful depth of colour, without harsh admixture of metallic shades; Sadie Burpee, white; Prince of Wales, rose; Queen Victoria, delicate yellow, touched with light purple; Countess of Radnor, a soft mauve flower of great beauty; Lady Grisel Hamilton, delicate lavender; Mars, intense crimson; Mrs. Dugdale, rose with a touch of primrose; Emily Eckord, delicate blue and mauve; Chancellor, light orange shade; Apple Blossom, pink, and Venus, rose, shaded buff. Sweet Peas may be sown in autumn or in the spring, autumn-sown seedlings, where the soil is moderately light and the position not too exposed, giving early flowers, and then those sown in spring provide a succession. Sow the seed in drills 3in. deep and leave a little space for water. A highly manured soil is needless for the seeds, as we believe in giving assistance afterwards in the form of mulchings and liquid manure. An excellent way is to sow a few seeds in pots under glass and plant out the seedlings. They are thus prepared at once to make quick growth. No wonder a flower so beautiful as this is creating interest, and for decoration it is unexcelled. Many fail through permitting the plants in dry seasons to become a prey to red-spider—the result of poor soil and insufficient water. Mulchings and liquid manure remedy this, but it is well to obtain sturdy growth from the start. Always remove seed-pods, as a double burden is too much for annual flowers. Unless the decayed flowers are kept constantly removed the plants soon "give out," as the gardener describes an utter collapse.

## PRUNUS DIVARICATA.

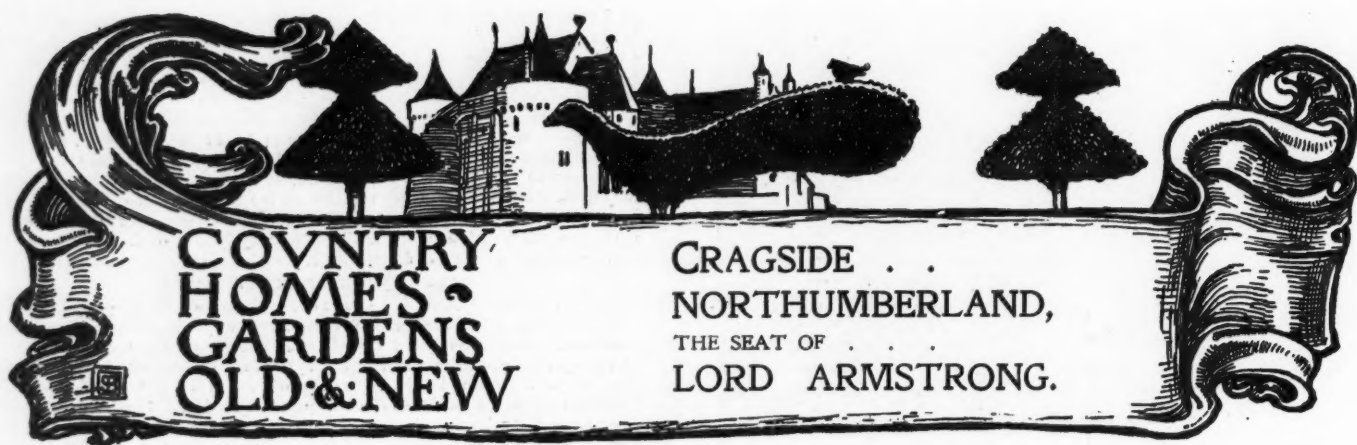
It is difficult to account for the rarity of this beautiful early-flowering tree. In March, sometimes before when the weather is not unkind, the spreading branches are as white as snow from the profusion of flowers. The tree is distinctly spreading, making quite a wide leafy head, and on this account it is of value for planting on the outskirts of the lawn. One of the finest specimens we know is in the Royal Gardens, Kew, on the lawn near the rockery, and even in winter the tree is pleasant to see, by reason of its widespread character.

## THE ROYAL GARDENS, KEW, IN SPRING.

The gardens at Kew are always worth a visit, but when the Daffodils are spearing up through the ground we know that spring is near, when the whole place is filled with blossom from the thousands of bulbs planted in the grass and in the woodland. During recent years this great Government establishment has undergone manifest improvement, and, though botanical work has advanced, the beauty of the gardens has increased, showing that it is not needless to have an ugly garden to teach botanical science. From now onwards until winter again returns the pleasure grounds and arboretum are gardens of flowers, spread as a carpet under the trees or in the openings from the shrubberies. This delightful phase of outdoor gardening is shown in all its fulness at Kew, beginning with the Snowdrops, followed by brave masses of Crocuses and the glorious host of Daffodils, with Tulips, Scillas, and all the beautiful flowers that succeed in the grass. Kew possesses one of the finest arboreta in the world, and of late the artistic way of grouping families has been followed with remarkable effect, and, as we have on many occasions pointed out in COUNTRY LIFE, it is only by grouping that a tree, shrub, or flower is seen in true beauty. This natural system is seen in the Daffodil planting, species and varieties of one kind being spread over a considerable area—perhaps the early Poet's Narcissus planted in thousands, or the Jonquil, sheets of richest yellow. If anyone contemplates planting flowers in the grass, it would be well to visit Kew occasionally from now onwards through the spring to make notes of the plants used for this purpose. The bulbs are put a little too close together, but that is the only fault.

## FORCED SHRUBS AT THIS SEASON.

It is delightful to see so much use made now of shrubs forced, that is, brought gently into bloom before they are naturally in flower out of doors. On more than one occasion we have seen exhibited groups of rare beauty and interest, small shrubs smothered with flowers, and there is nothing unnatural about these forced plants, the flowers retaining their true colour and form. So many things when subjected to heat lose all character. We noticed lately an exhibit of Messrs. William Paul of Waltham Cross, a fairy-like display, a study in tender pink, softest rose, and purest white. There were double and single Peaches, Almonds, Plums, the graceful Pyrus Malus floribunda, Guelder Rose, Japanese Cherries, Staphylea colchica, and many other kinds. Those who have not yet grown shrubs to beautify the greenhouse at this season should do so. The shrubs must be properly prepared, but there are no cultural difficulties to overcome, as they respond freely to artificial warmth.



**L**ORD ARMSTRONG'S house is situated in a position quite uncommon. The estate lies upon the river Coquet in Northumberland, and in the midst of a wild moorland district with lofty hills crowned by beetling crags, on the tops of which many entrenchments mark the ancient occupation of British fighting men. The dale is hemmed in by these great elevations, and the rocky ledges peep out above the richly wooded steepes, while below the river winds its course over a rocky bed. The scenery is extremely grand, the deep woods giving it a special character, while the old church tower rises

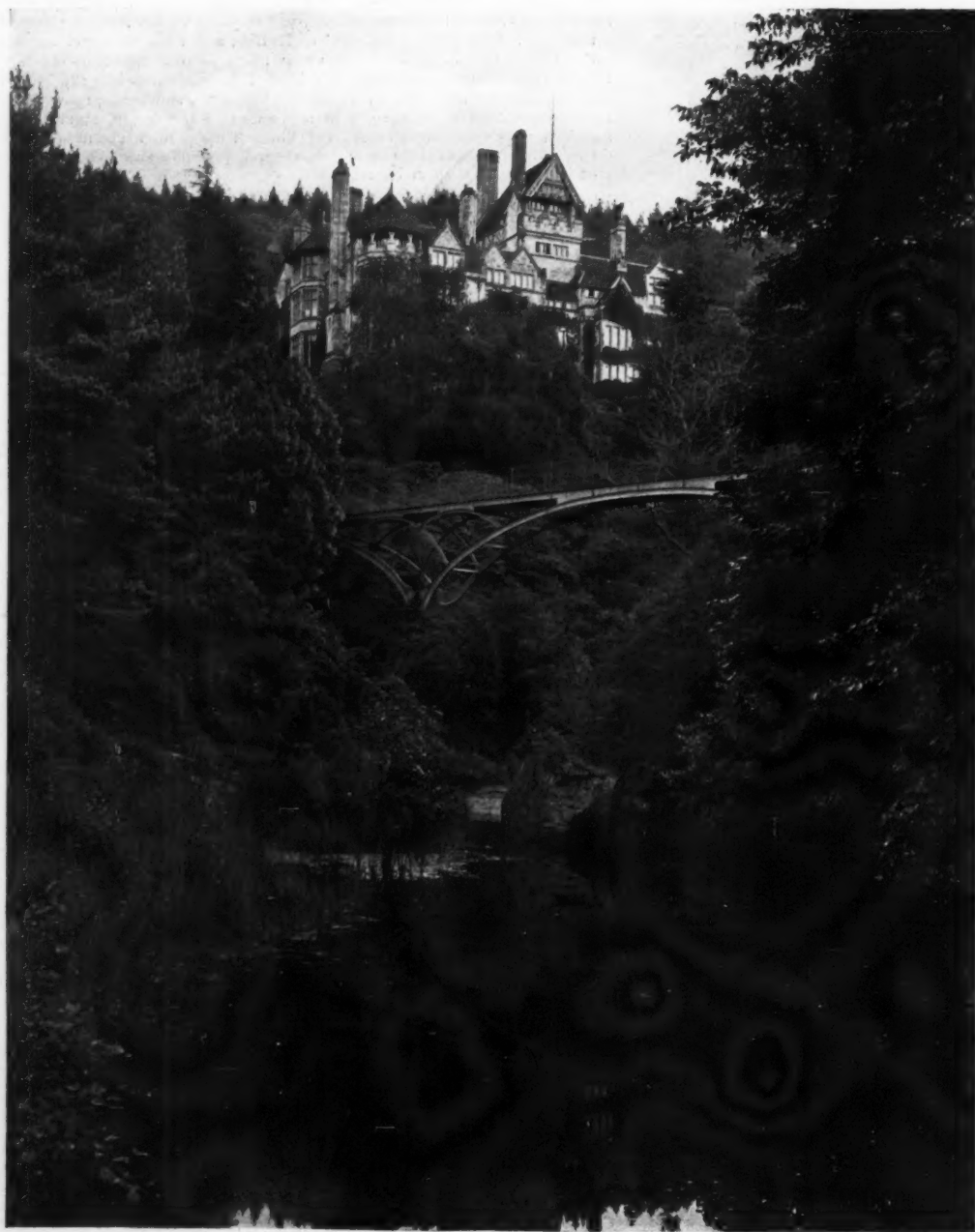
from the hollow, and there is a picturesque bridge with triangular buttresses spanning the stream. On the south rise the sharp edges of Simonside, on the east the imposing rocks of Crag End, and on the north the moors towards Cartington, while on the west the eye seeks the recesses at the head of Coquet Dale. Here was a great forest richly stored with game, and now the wild uncultivated moorland stretches on every side upon the hills.

The Moss troopers and Rievers of the Marches—those stubborn enemies of "Belted Will" Howard—made many a raid

through the cultivated lands in the hollow, where every farmhouse was a fortalice, with housing for the cattle below, and loopholes through which the sturdy yeoman might wing his shaft or discharge his trusty musket ball. Still the memory lingers at Rothbury of those formidable times, which are marked by the Rievers' Well near the river, and the story of Border feuds still fills the dale, while the mischievous Duergar or fairies still haunt the lofty crest of Simonside, from which you may take a far view from Scotland to the sea.

Lord Armstrong's modern mansion, which is an imposing structure of mediæval character appropriate to its situation, stands upon a rocky platform halfway up the slope which rises high above the banks of the Deddon Burn, a tributary of the Coquet.

The gardens stretch down the slope with wonderful terraces and winding walks through rich and deep woodland, while the surrounding parts of the estate are richly timbered with very varied foliage. Rothbury, in fact, is the creation of Lord Armstrong, who in that salubrious place has formed an estate of original character full of surpassing beauty. Altogether, the estate covers about 14,000 acres, and it is indicative of the spirit in which it was created that the system of small allotments has been adopted in parcels of three acres and upwards. The engineering difficulties encountered were overcome in a remarkable manner. Thus, the house is supplied with water from lakes or meres on the hills above, and the water pressure is used to drive dynamos supplying the mansion with electric light, and furnishing



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THE HOUSE FROM THE DELL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."





GARDENS OLD AND NEW.—CRAGSIDE: THE SOUTH ENTRANCE.

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LOOKING TOWARDS THE HOUSE.

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power to a turbine which is used for the purpose of compression in the silo on the home farm at Crag End, where Lord Armstrong has large herds of shorthorns and Jerseys.

The creation of the house and estate has thus been a triumph, and it is a striking lesson of what can be done when sound principles are adopted and the most is made of conditions that seem adverse. The planting that has gone on for nearly forty years has been wonderfully successful, and in the early days of spring, as in the full richness of summer, or again when autumn has blown, those hillsides, with their varied hues, are marvellously beautiful, while the garden has attractions quite its own, and is glorified in particular by vast masses of azaleas and

rhododendrons, which flourish in the sheltered situation and in the light soil of that country.

The mansion stands less than two miles from Cragside Station, and is a feature in the landscape for many miles around. On leaving the station and crossing the handsome bridge that spans the river, a sharp turn is made to the right, and midway between the town and Cragside the road divides. The way leading to the left is taken if it be desired to see the glass erections; otherwise the road running along the valley is followed until the entrance gates on the brow of the hill are reached.

The visitor does not at first suspect that Cragside is an example of what may be accomplished in a comparatively few years. It is a modern place, indeed, but the grounds are now



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FROM THE TERRACE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



adorned with noble trees, conifers especially, and by those glorious masses of rhododendrons, with a host of ornamental trees and shrubs. But forty years ago or less there was nothing but a bare rocky hillside, and, as one writer says, Cragside may well be regarded as one of the greatest examples of the planter's art during the present century. From many points beautiful views may be obtained of the surroundings, especially near the plant houses, and our attention is arrested by the luxuriant grounds which extend from south-east to north-west, about five miles.

The carriage drive from the south-west entrance runs by the side of a hill, and glorious views are obtained of the country, forming a series of pictures for the eye to dwell upon. The country in a westerly direction is spread out like a map, and the picturesque town of Rothbury nestles in the valley. The road runs at a considerable height above the bed of the Coquet, which here receives the water from the beautiful stream that meanders through the grounds after leaving the chain of artificial lakes at the northern parts of the glen, and passes immediately in front of the mansion, charming both eye and ear in its onward course.

The lower slopes are planted with many trees, conspicuous amongst them being the birch, most graceful of all woodland trees, the hornbeam, and the thorn. On the upper slope, which is unusually rocky, and in parts rises to a height of several hundred feet, with the background of rugged rocks, evergreens are chiefly planted. Scotch firs are also conspicuous, and grow vigorously amid the rocks. Abies



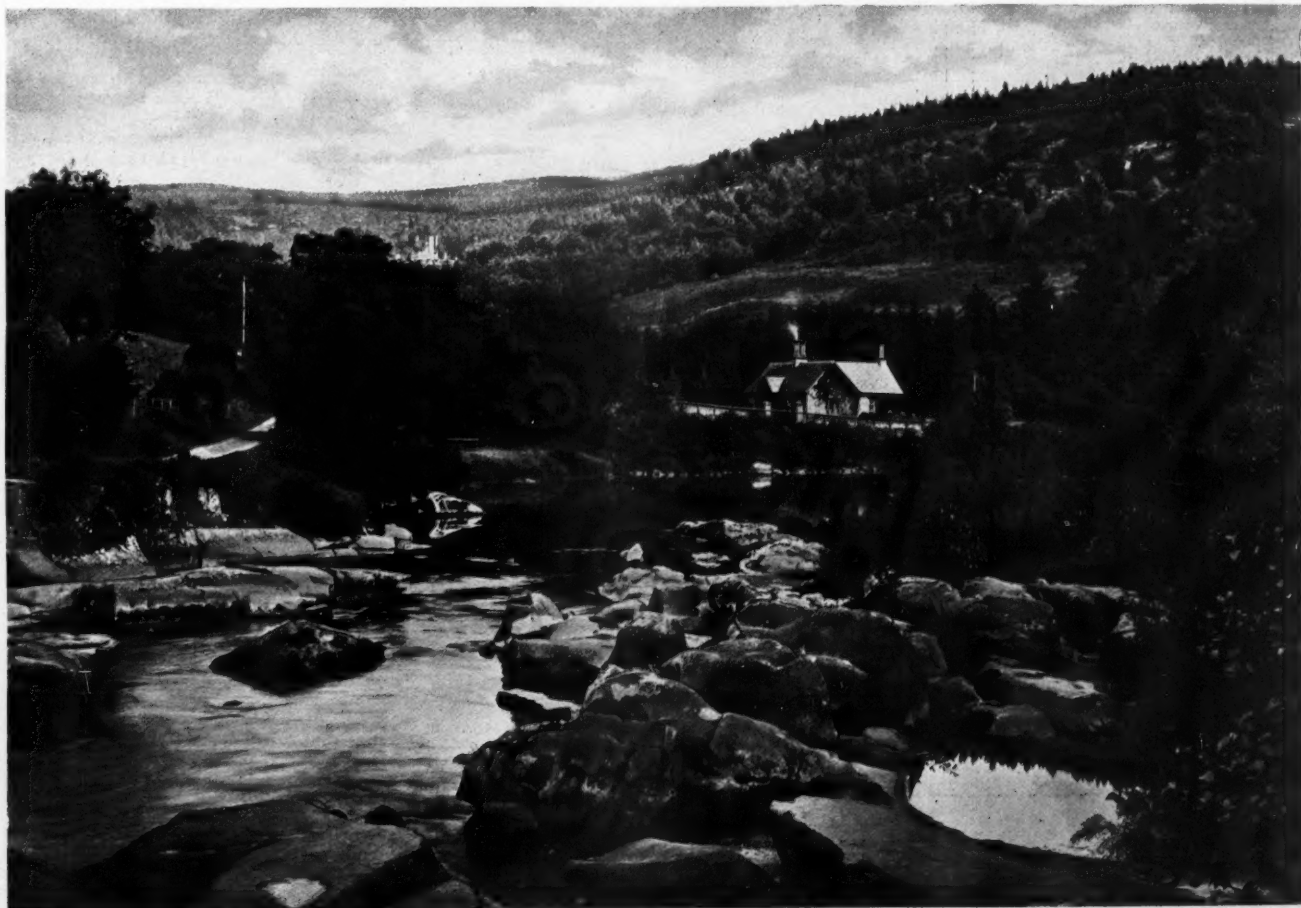
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## IN THE DELL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Albertiana and other fine conifers may be seen in the grounds close to the house.

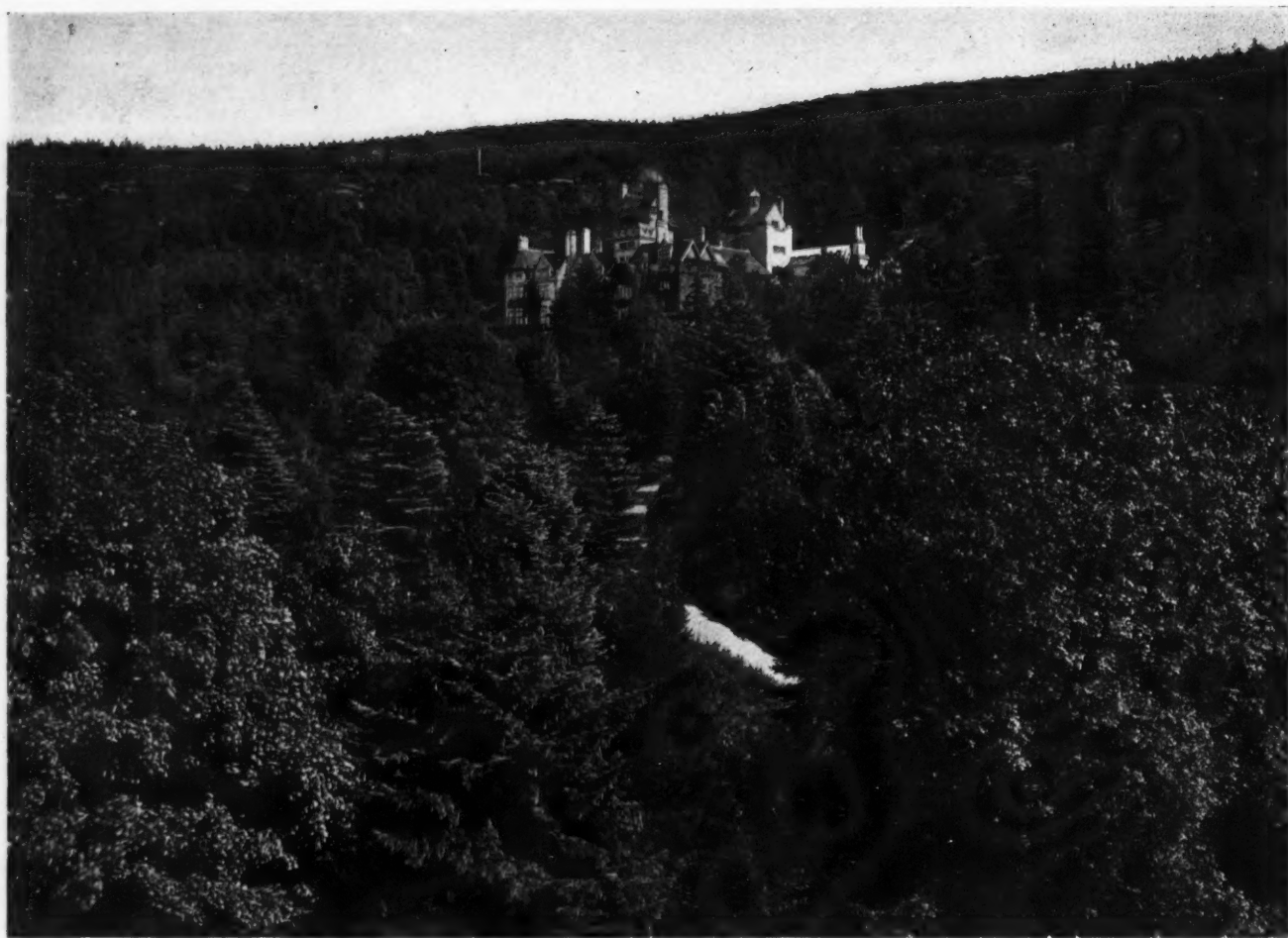
The glory of Cragside garden consists, to a large extent, in its flowering shrubs. There are thousands of rhododendrons, which make the hillside in late May and early June brilliant with colour. This is a beautiful time in this Northumberland garden, when the leafy bushes are in full flower, since, being on the hillside, their dense masses of blossom produce a rich and wonderful effect, and this glorious colouring is enhanced by the groups of hardy azaleas, which are even more brilliant than the rhododendrons in spring.



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## THE LODGE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



Copyright.

THE HOUSE FROM THE DOWNS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

whilst their leaf tints in autumn are as rich as anything in the woodland.

A very attractive feature, too, consists of the pernettyas, which grow so finely in Ireland and many Southern gardens. But they are quite at home here, the shrubs being of large size, and crowded with brightly coloured berries. *Skimmia japonica* and *Andromeda floribunda* are conspicuous also, and it is delightful to see in the very rocky places the *Cotoneaster microphylla*

growing strongly, its wiry and leafy shoots made bright with hosts of berries.

For some considerable distance the escarpment consists of masses of rocks, incapable of supporting vegetation, and the ascent to these, rendered comparatively easy by the admirably arranged walks and drives by which the grounds are intersected in all directions, is well worth making for the magnificent scenery, especially beautiful when the Cheviots are capped with snow.

Near the glass houses are gold and silver hollies, which are very bright in winter, and there are several glass screens for the protection of trees and shrubs not sufficiently hardy to bear full exposure. This is a very interesting feature of the gardening here. As our illustrations show, the house is in part hidden with ivy, and there is great boldness in the aspect of the whole estate. The grounds are magnificently leafy, and the house nestles, so to say, on the hillside, amidst all this luxuriant tree-life. Of flower garden proper there is not so much as in many less imposing places, and it is the wonderful tree and shrub life that is so impressive.

Equal taste and judgment have ruled the creation and improvement of Cragside, and the planting has been most judicious. There is luxuriance, but no crowding, and open glades and wide spaces add to the charm of the glorious woodland, with heaths, rhododendrons, ferns, and alpine plants in great profusion. The hardy heather is most charming, and many hundreds of loads of sand and



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A WATERFALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



peat have been brought from the moors to forward the growth. Indeed, the features of Nature have been turned to the use of man in a way altogether successful at Cragside.

## VIGNETTES FROM NATURE.

NATURE'S barometers are the only ones of which most country-folk have any knowledge. These they may consult at all times, and they know them by heart. Almost all field-workers are "weather-wise," and their conversation on this head has no town conventionalism about it. The farmer has been so beaten about by wind and weather, that he himself is scarcely sensible to changing atmospheric conditions; but that does not prevent his observing its influence on the things about him. Before rain his dogs grow sleepy and dull, the cat constantly licks herself, geese gaggle in the pond, fowls and pigeons go early to roost, and the farm horses grow restless. Abroad, the ants are all hurry and scurry, rushing hither and thither; spiders crowd on the wall; toads emerge from their holes; and the garden paths are everywhere covered with slugs and snails. When the chaffinch says "weet, weet," it is an infallible sign of rain. As the rain draws nearer, peacocks cry and frogs croak clamorously from the ditches. These are signs which almost everyone has heard who lives in the country, though one of the surest ways of predicting weather changes is by observing the habits of snails. Snails never drink, but imbibe moisture during rain and exude it afterwards. They are seldom seen abroad except before rain, when they commence climbing trees and getting upon leaves. The tree snail is so sensitive to weather that it will commence to climb two days before the rain comes. If the downpour is to be prolonged, the snail seeks the under part of a leaf; but if a short or light rain is coming on, it stays on the outside. There is another species which is yellow before and bluish after it. Others indicate change by dents and protuberances resembling tubercles. These begin to show themselves ten days before rain, and when it comes the pores of the tubercles open and draw in the moisture. In others again deep indentations, beginning at the head between the horns and ending with the jointure of the tail, appear a few days before a storm. One of the simplest of Nature's barometers is a spider's web. When there is a prospect of wind or rain, the spider shortens the filaments by which its web is sustained and leaves it in this state as long as the weather is variable. If it elongates its threads, it is a sign of fine calm weather, the duration of which may be judged by the length to which the threads are let out. If the spider remains inactive, it is a sign of rain; if it keeps at work during rain, the downpour will not last long, and will be followed by fine weather. Observation has taught that the spider makes changes in its web every twenty-four hours, and that if such changes are made in the evening, just before sunset, the night will be clear and beautiful.

The Iceland falcon and the ptarmigan have pretty much the same habitat, the one preying upon the other. The ptarmigan's plumage during the breeding season is dark brown, even approaching to black; but in autumn, during the transition stage, it is grey, this being the general tint of the mosses and lichens among which it lives. Suppose, however, that the summer bird never changed its plumage, what chance of survival would it stand against its enemies when the ground was covered with snow? Remaining, as it would, a black speck on the otherwise white surface, it would in a few years become extinct. The ptarmigan, then, furnishes an example of the assumption of three different states of plumage, each assimilating to the physical conditions by which it is surrounded. Of course the same rule applies to the falcon, which is also white. Precisely the same set of facts operate in the case of the large snowy owl in the fir countries which it inhabits. Here its food consists of lemmings, alpine hares, and birds, particularly the willow-grouse and ptarmigan. The balance of Nature would be slightly against it, however, in the capture of animals which have assumed protective colouring, and hence we are told that "it has been known to watch the grouse-shooters a whole day for the purpose of sharing the spoil. On such occasions it perches on a high tree, and when a bird is shot, skims down and carries it off before the sportsmen can get near it." Yet again the same reasoning applies to the beautiful silver fox, which structurally in no wise differs from its red-furred cousin of more southern countries. Hares, according to the altitude of their range, show almost every degree of variability between red and white. Our common hare is widely distributed, and to such an extent do varietal forms differ, that several distinct species (so-called) have been evolved out of one. The extreme forms do seem widely separated, until we connect

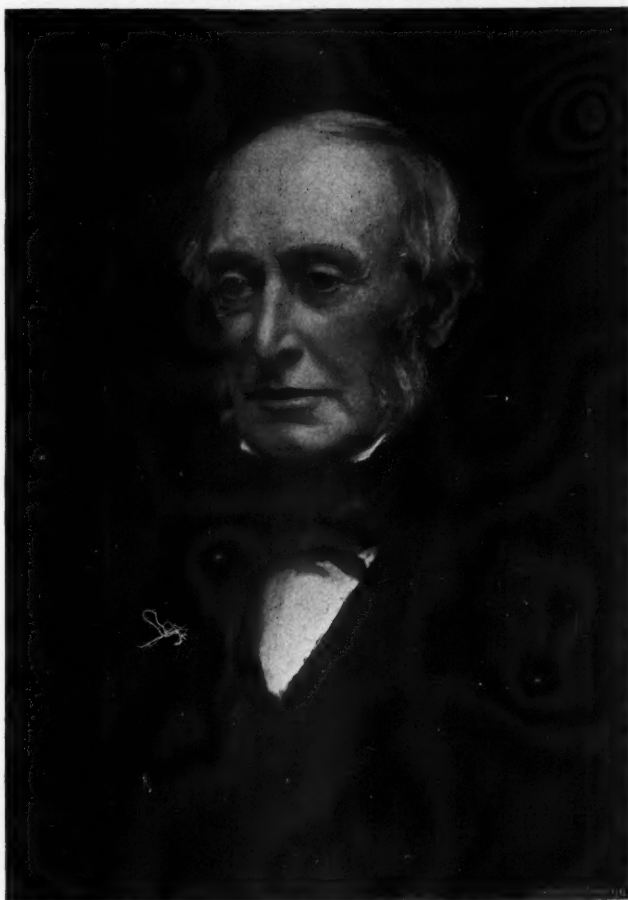
them with the many intermediate links. It then becomes evident that these differences are, after all, such as may be accounted for by conditions of climate and geographical range. The northern form has thick fur, which inclines to white in winter; the central variety has fur of only moderate thickness, becoming grey in winter; and the southern, thin fur of a deep rufous tinge. The calling of these varieties "species" is simply scientific hair-splitting, though this hardly applies to the true variable or mountain hare. This alpine form is distributed over the countries within the Arctic Circle, though with its southern haunt is determined by Scotland and Ireland. Again, in this species we have three forms, each mainly characteristic of certain latitudes. The first inhabits warm low-lying countries, and does not change colour in winter; of this the Irish hare is a type; the second, the variety common to Northern Europe, which is grey in summer and purely white in winter; while the third is the Arctic form—white right through the year. The six types are probably all varieties of one species, which, for protection, conform to their own environment; and so successfully that the progeny of two pair of mountain hares which in 1854 were turned down in the Faroes might long ago have been counted by thousands.

Along the meadow brook a stately heron has left its imprints; the water-hen's track is marked through the reeds; and there upon the icy margin are the blurred webs of wild ducks. A bright red squirrel runs along the white wall. In its warm fur it shows sharply against the fence. Naturalists say that the squirrel hibernates through the winter; but this is hardly so. A bright day, even though cold and frosty, brings him out to visit some summer store. The prints of the squirrel are sharply cut, the tail at times just brushing the snow.

The mountain linnet has come down to the lowlands; and we flush a flock from an ill-farmed field where weeds run rampant. When alarmed the birds wheel aloft, uttering the while soft twitterings, then betake themselves to the trees. The seeds of brooklime, flax, and knapweed the twine seems partial to, and this wild-weed field is to them a very paradise. Just now, walking in the woods, the cry of the bullfinch is heard, as perhaps the most melancholy of all our birds, but its bright scarlet breast compensates for its want of cheeriness. A flock of diminutive goldcrests rushes past us, and in the fir wood we hear but cannot see a flock of skinkins. Higher up the valley, towards the hills, tracks of another kind begin to appear. On the fells we come across a dead herdwick, trampled about with innumerable feet. We examine these closely, and find that they are of two species—the raven and the buzzard. Further in the scrub we track a pine-marten to its lair in the rocks. The dogs drive it from its stronghold, and, being arboreal in its habits, it immediately makes up the nearest pine trunk. Its rich brown fur and orange throat make it one of the most lithely beautiful of British animals. A pair of stoats or ermines, with their flecked coats just in the transition stage, have their haunt in the same wood. From the snow we see that last night they have threaded the aisles of the pines in search of food. This clear-cut sharp track by the fence is that of a fox.

Although Britain can show no parallel either in number or brilliance to the living lights of the tropics, we are not without several interesting phosphorescent creatures of our own. Those whose business leads them abroad in the fields and woods through the short summer nights are often

treated to quite remarkable luminous sights. Last night the writer was lying on a towering limestone escarpment, waiting to intercept a gang of poachers. The darkness was dead and unrelieved, and a warm rain studded every grass blade with moisture. When the day and sun broke, this would glow with a million brilliant prismatic colours, then suddenly vanish. But the illumination came sooner, and in a different way. The rain ceased, and hundreds of tiny living lights lit up the sward. In the intense darkness these shone with an unusual brilliancy, and lit up the almost impalpable moisture. Every foot of ground was studded with its star-like gem, and these twinkled and shone as the fireflies stirred in the grass. The sight was quite an un-English one, and the soft green glow only paled at the coming of day. One phase of this interesting phenomenon is that now we can have a reproduction of it nightly. The fireflies were collected, turned down on the lawn, and their hundred luminous lamps now shed a soft lustre over all the green. Why our British fireflies are designated "glow-worms" is difficult to understand. *Lampyrus noctiluca* has nothing worm-like about it. It is a true insect. The popular misconception has probably arisen in this wise. The female glow-worm, the light-giver, is wingless; the male is winged. The latter, however, has but little of the light-emitting power possessed by the female. Only the light-givers are collected, and being destitute of the first attribute of an insect, wings, are set down in popular parlance as worms. Old mossy banks, damp hedgerows, and shaded woods are the loved haunts of the fireflies, and the warm nights of the soft summer months most induce them to burn their soft lustre. Some widowed worm or firefly flirt may shed her luminous self in the darkness even on into dying summer or autumn. But this is unusual. It is not definitely known what purpose is served by the emission of the soft green light, but it has long been suspected that



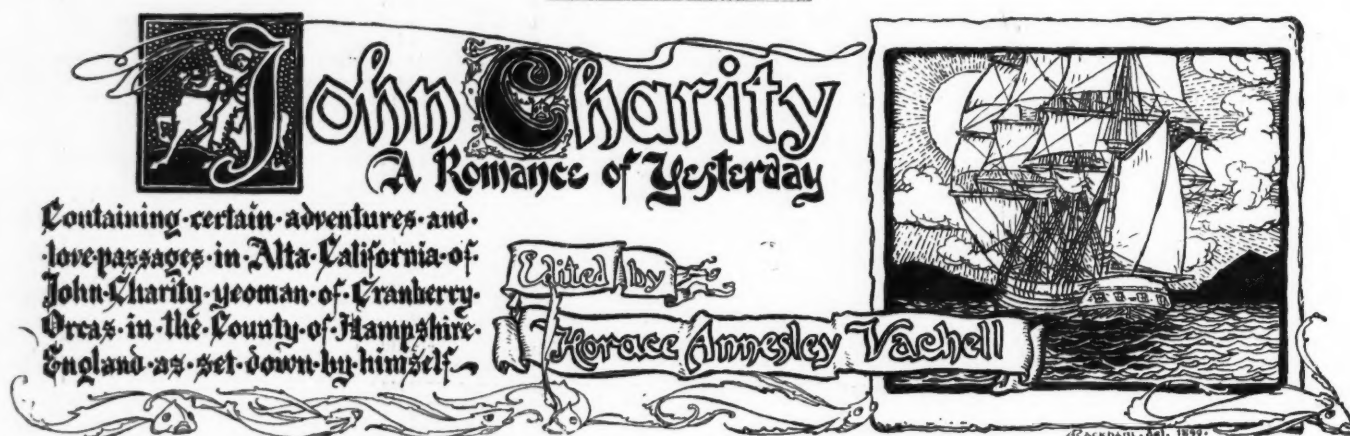
LORD ARMSTRONG.

the lustre was to attract the male. Gilbert White found that glow-worms were attracted by the light of candles, and many of them came into his parlour. Another naturalist by the same process captured as many as forty male glow-worms in an evening. Still another suggestion is that the phosphorescence serves for a protection or means of defence to the creatures possessing it, and an incident which seems to support this view has been actually witnessed. This was in the case of a carabeus

which was observed running round and round a phosphorescent centipede, evidently wishing, but not daring, to attack it. A third explanation of the phenomenon is that it affords light for the creature to see by. A curious confirmation of this is the fact that in the insect genus to which our British firefly belongs, the *Lampyridæ*, the degree of luminosity is exactly in inverse proportion to the development of the vision.

RUSTICUS.

(To be continued.)



## CHAPTER XV.

## OF FRIENDS AND ENEMIES.

NEXT day I returned to Monterey, according to my instructions, leaving Magdalena in the care of Vallejo and Tia Maria Luisa. Nor did I see my dear again, although I wrote her a long letter, which I entrusted to the Indita. Later, I learned that she and the good aunt were sent south to Santa Barbara, Magdalena returning to her father's house, and Tia Maria Luisa paying a visit to the Bustons, of whom mention has been made. Meantime, I heard from Letty and Courtenay. They had been as far south as San Diego, slowly collecting their cargo of hides and selling their wares at the different ports. Courtenay wrote that Jaynes was at Tia Maria's feet, a victim—so he said—to the *beaux yeux de sa casett* (for the dame had fat acres in her own right and many gold pieces safely hid in the *tapanco* of her house). But Letty added in a postscript that 'twas the sight of Ben Buston's happiness and the red-headed babies which had stirred the ancient mariner's heart. Then there was a long epistle from my dear mother, exhaling love, lavender, and anxiety. Austin Valence, it seemed, had recovered of his wound, and had taken to a rakehell life that was playing the mischief with his purse and reputation. These letters I answered, but feared to write to Magdalena, knowing that if they fell into wrong hands they would breed trouble for my Rachel. Nor did she write; but, nightly, she came to me in my dreams—a gracious figure with love burning in her eyes. Why did I not find means to send her a message? I never suspected—fool that I was—her loneliness, perplexity, anxiety. How could she guess that I was working hard with nothing to sweeten labour save thoughts of her?

For I was quartered in Alvarado's house, acting as his secretary, and when I add that my master rose each day at four and gave sixteen hours to the service of his state, you may believe that 'twas no holiday life I was leading. Upon August 13th the Catalina dropped anchor in Monterey Bay, bringing despatches from Bustamente, and although Alvarado's title as chief executive was not at that time legally confirmed, none doubted now his powers.

That same afternoon, I remember, I ventured to speak of his love affairs, that of late had been somewhat neglected. He frowned.

"This is no time for marrying or giving in marriage. Well, señor, do you still wish to be a ranchero?"

I told him yes, descanting enthusiastically upon Arcadian joys. He listened courteously, and presently sighed. Then, to my surprise, he said abruptly: "I presume you are prepared to swear allegiance to Mexico and to become a Catholic?"

My face fell. Alvarado smiled cynically.

"I think I can promise you as much land as you want—now."

The emphasis on the *now* was a dominant note of triumph.

"What is your English citizenship to you? And as for your conscience—is it not true that your countrymen leave such ballast at Cape Horn?"

I was on the rack. This man's eyes were as gimlets boring and twisting into my brain. Upon this stake, a rancho, I had pinned my hopes, my time, my labour.

"Your Excellency," I replied at length, "I thank you for your kindness to me, but I can neither swear allegiance to Mexico nor join your church."

"Sleep over it. What of Magdalena Estrada?"

Never had I been so sorely tempted.

"Well, my friend?"

"My answer will be the same to-morrow."

"That is your last word?"

"It is."

I had risen from my chair, and so had he. Now that I had said "No," the situation seemed less strained. Alvarado held out his lean hand.

"Pardon me. I wished to test you. So much base coin passes current that for my life I cannot always detect the sterling metal. However, I never doubted what your answer would be."

I blushed, for Heaven knows what that answer might have been.

"You shall have land," he continued, "as soon as I am governor *de jure*, as well as *de facto*."

"And my foster-brother?"

"*Ojala!* Do you know that he plotted against me at Santa Barbara?"

I was covered with confusion, for I had hoped that Courtenay's dealings with the *abajenos* had escaped my patron's notice. Since, I have often wondered how and where he got his secret information.

"Cheer up," he said, very kindly. "I will make a bargain with you, and with your foster-brother, whom frankly I would sooner have for friend than foe, although"—he looked at me queerly—"although to me he will be held as neither. But for your sake he shall have land too. And, in confidence, he and that pretty firebrand, his wife, will be safer and happier on a rancho. But you—I cannot spare you. I want you here, here by my side."

He began to pace up and down.

"You are ambitious, no? Yes, yes, I can read your heart. That is why I like you. And we, you and I, are not free to please ourselves. You take my meaning? This lotos life is not for us. I speak to you as a brother. If I can hold California for the Californians I shall do so. If that proves impossible"—he sighed, and finished his sentence very slowly—"if I am driven to it, mark you, I shall offer the bone over which these dogs are quarrelling to—England. And will England prove ungrateful to me—and to you?"

I was fired by his passionate interrogation. If it should be my good fortune to lend a hand in the hoisting of our flag; if I, a yeoman's son, should be called on to take part in a game such as this, my life would cheerfully be staked on the issue. For I knew that California was even then what it has since been called—a Golden State, a principality worth the acceptance of that gracious maiden, her sweet Majesty Victoria. And I knew that Mexico had lost her grip of this treasure, and that time must take it from her and give it to the all-conquering Anglo-Saxon. Yet who can doubt to-day that had it been possible for us to have accomplished such a piece of work, the United States must have interfered, and a war would have ensued as the world has not seen, for the prize that Alvarado spoke of as a bone proved on inspection a gem of gems, a very Koh-i-noor, whose rays were destined to dazzle and attract all mankind.

Accordingly I pledged myself anew to my master, and professed myself ardent to follow such a leader. None the less his last words somewhat cooled my protestations.

"As for marriage, Martina Castro is constrained to wait. Be patient."

Now a man who can control his own passions can control also the lives and passions of others. I confess that I was plastic as clay in the hands of this skilful and strong potter.

As I sat silent, he said in a low voice: "I have reason to



know that the comisionado, Castellero, whom we may expect now in a few weeks, will bring two sets of papers; one set will confirm me governor, the other set will give California to Carlos Carrillo and his friends."

"But"—I stammered in astonishment—"why and wherefore?"

"I may not be alive when Castellero lands," said Alvarado, quietly. "My life was attempted in Los Angeles, and again at Santa Barbara. No, I did not mention it to you; the less said about such matters the better; but, Juan, they may slit your throat too, so be on your guard."

"Whom does your Excellency suspect?"

He spread out his hands, smiling.

"Castañeda would kill me for a tamale, so would Soto; so would"—he paused, eyeing me keenly—"so would Estrada."

"Magdalena's father?" I exclaimed.

"He is false as Judas. You must know as much."

My cheek flushed, for I had withheld from my chief what had passed between Estrada and me when I was in charge of the prisoners. I could not bring myself to prefer charges against my dear's father. Alvarado continued:

"All these Mexicans are scoundrels. They have not even the thieves' honour of being loyal to each other, as Narciso Estrada may find out to his cost. Well, *amigo*, we are playing for high stakes."

The use of the "we" touched me.

Later, when I was alone, I reflected bitterly that my gain must prove Magdalena's loss, for I could not doubt that when supreme authority was legally his my chief would hold his enemies to strict account. And so thinking a suspicion that had long festered in my mind became certainty. I identified Narciso Estrada with the taller of the two men whose plots I had overheard when lying snug in the gulch near Magdalena's window. Soto, of course, was the other. And now I was almost equally well assured that Castañeda had been concerned in the attempt on my life, and, curiously enough, I had proof presumptive of this within a few days. In acknowledgment of my services in taking the prisoners to Sonoma, Alvarado had presented me with a *caponera* of twenty-five horses, led by a beautiful *yegua pinta*, a calico piebald mare; and with this *caponera* was included the vaquero in charge, a Yaqui Indian from the plains of Sonora, Procopio by name. He was as cunning, pious, patient, and superstitious a fellow as could be found in the Californias; and not the least of his good qualities was a faithful affection for me. Now it was the Yaqui's duty to come to my bedside every morning. One day I marked a queer expression in his eyes.

"Don Juan," said he, "you are a man of many friends."

"I have enemies also, Procopio."

"'Twas of them I wished to speak, señor."

I could not help laughing as Procopio showed his teeth in an appreciative grin. It was typical of the Californian that he wished to spare my feelings, and preferred the *oratio obliqua*, so to speak, of the Latin race to plain Saxon directness of speech.

"You had a narrow escape at Santa Maria, no? Well, the man who fired that bullet, señor, is here, in Monterey."

"Good," said I, with interest. "His name?"

"Cosmé Servin, the *mozo* of Don Santiago de Castañeda, who is first cousin to the devil," and Procopio piously crossed himself. I could see that he had more to say, and he continued softly: "I have cast six bullets, señor, and have dipped them all in holy water, and marked each with the blessed cross. One is for Cosmé, because he too is a devil, and the others—"

"Yes—the others."

"There are many devils, Don Juan. Ah! you laugh, señor, but 'tis well for you that I'm an honest man and a good Catholic."

"How do you know that Cosmé Servin fired that shot at me?"

Procopio laughed slyly and spread out his long thin fingers, the fingers of an Autolytus.

"He and I are courting the same girl, señor, Eustachia Bonilla. She loves me, the dear one, but she hates Cosmé, who is beast as well as devil."

Cosmé seemingly was fool as well, for he had bragged to the girl of what he had done.

"He says," murmured Procopio, "that if he had dared to cross the quicksands he would have used the puñal. *Ojala!* he didn't dip his bullet into holy water."

I gave him some silver, and told him to keep his ears open and his mouth shut. That same day I met de Castañeda in the plaza. He and Soto had returned to the capitol from Los Angeles. The Mexican enquired punctiliously after the health of Letty and Courtenay.

"I learn with pleasure," he added, in his own tongue, "that the Heron is due in Monterey Bay."

"Yes," said I, curtly.

"You are changed, señor," he continued, blandly. "You look like a true caballero. How long do you remain in the city?"

"My plans are uncertain, señor."

"Nothing is certain in this world."

"Except death," said I, moodily, for I was linking his visit to Monterey with Letty's return.

"True," he answered with a grim smile; "although some of us bear charmed lives." And he saluted and passed on.

Next day, the Heron came to her old moorings, and I went aboard at once. Courtenay said, with a cheerful grin, that he had made a mistake.

"I kept my plots from you, John. After all, the difference is small. You ran with the hare, I coursed with the hounds."

"A sorry pack, Courtenay—too fat and sleek for hunting."

"You take life seriously," he replied, laughing. "Your Alvarado is a surly fellow. Egad! the work *he* does gives *me* the backache."

Thus lightly he dismissed the subject. And if I condemn him now as frivolous and volatile, 'tis because I cannot see his laughing face, the twinkle in his blue eyes, the coaxing tones of his melodious voice. These had ever affected me, and I was so truly glad to welcome him, that I lacked moral courage to scold him. He took for granted that what was mine was his. And he added that he thirsted for pastoral joys, and seemed as sorry as I that the coming of Castellero was delayed. Jaynes turned over his ship to the mate. Courtenay and Letty lodged with Thomas Larkin; and Courtenay, having money to burn in company with Castro and de Castañeda, left his wife to be entertained by John Charity. What hours I could spare from my duties I spent with her. Time had changed a girl into a woman, and if a sparkle or two had fled from her eyes, a dimple from her cheek, there glowed instead the light that warms as well as illumines. In my sight she was ten times as beautiful. Castañeda, I fancy, thought so too.

"Courtenay will grow jealous of me," I said one Sunday, as we sat together in the sand-dunes that fringe the bay. I had marked her willingness to be often in my company.

"He does not need me as he did," she answered, constrainedly, her cheeks flushing. "He can amuse himself without—us."

She slipped in the "us" so slyly that I laughed. But my heart was sore. In the old Oxford days I had burned with jealousy because my friend made other friends so easily. So I could now sympathise with poor Letty.

"I wish he would leave Castañeda alone," I remarked, gloomily.

She raised her brows, the innocent creature.

"You always speak so—so ungenerously of him," she murmured. "And 'tis not like you, dear John."

I was about to tell her of Cosmé Servin. Yet I could not bring myself to speak ill of my enemy. Moreover, ever since Castañeda had met Letty he seemed to have reformed, and amongst the Montereyns there was much rejoicing over this tardy repentance. As for me, the ugly smear of a dissolute life was no plainer than the scar on his face. Such a man, to compass his ends, can play any part.

Meantime, old Mark's courtship gave us many an honest laugh. I had called with him upon Tia Maria Luisa the night of his arrival, hoping to tickle her favour with a peace-offering—a large box of *panocha*, a sweetmeat she preferred above all others. Mark placed in her plump hands a bottle of brandied cherries, and if she counted me a Trojan she did not scruple to accept my gift. I told her that Courtenay and I were about to become rancheros.

"I heard that you were busying yourself about such matters," she replied, politely. "I was not aware, however, that a foreigner and a heretic could acquire title. Have you found yourself a wife, señor?"

We had opened the bottle of cherries, but the good liqueur in which they were preserved had toughened (as alcohol will) rather than softened the stout dame's heart. I answered softly that I knew where to look for a wife, whereat she chuckled in an oleaginous fashion. I made certain that she was in possession of information of interest to me, but her moon face had no more expression than a new laid egg.

"If you marry," she spoke to me, but her beady eyes rested complacently upon old Mark, "you must join the only true church."

"Oh!" growled he, "I've no objections to turning Roman Catholic. Not a bit. But it would take a woman, not a priest, to convert me"; and so saying, he glanced very sweetly at Tia Maria.

"You love not the ladies, señor capitán," said the lady, coquettishly. "See, you are unmarried. *Que Lastima!*"

"I love 'em," said Mark, "but they don't love me."

Tia Maria screamed with laughter. Old Mark looked very comical, a typical sea-dog, but he was not displeased. The laughter was complimentary, ironical; that an English captain should lack ladies to love him was, according to Tia Maria, supremely ridiculous. If the old sea-dog's big black beard was streaked with white, what of it? Had he not burnt Nelson's powder at Trafalgar? And if his language, and maybe his

clothes, smelt of tar, both were silvered with the salt of half-a-dozen oceans.

"This is no town for bachelors," said Courtenay. "The governor's wedding will breed others."

"I know of one other already," said Tia Maria, with a malicious glance at me. "Don Miguel Soto and my niece Magdalena are likely to become one."

"Soto!" exclaimed Courtenay, with his most scornful laugh. "What!"

Tia Maria shrugged her fat shoulders.

"It makes so little difference. Look you, I married a small ugly man. *Ojala!* but he was ill-favoured. Still he made me a good husband. I never saw him till my wedding-day. And then it was too late. He gave me lovely *donas*. This *rebozo* was one of them. You see he is dead, but the *donas* are still in that big chest yonder."

Courtenay told the dame that now she could marry to please herself.

"Magdalena," she continued, "disobeyed her father once. She won't do it again. *Madre de Dios!* what a little fool!"

The hot angry blood began to flow into my cheeks. I could not doubt that my dear had been punished, perhaps cruelly, for her disobedience. I could see in fancy Estrada's stern face, and thought continually of that beautiful but lonely ranch near San Luis Obispo. You may be sure I wasted no righteous wrath upon Soto and his suit, for most of these Californian dames had the trick of fibbing. But I swore that some day, by God's grace, my love and devotion should make amends to Magdalena for the suffering she had endured.

Presently we took our leave of Tia Maria Luisa, leaving old Mark in her tender care. She squeezed my hand at parting. "*Ay yi,*" she whispered, "I am sorry for you, my friend; but, *Virgen Santisima!* are there not many girls in Alta California? One piece of *panocha*, look you, is as good as another." She was nibbling at the sweetmeat with her small white teeth.

"El Capitan doesn't think so," I replied, significantly, and the answer pleased her. Afterward I learned that from that hour she counted me a friend.

(To be continued.)

## Ibex Shooting in the Hushe Nullah, Baltistan.

HAVING got "khubber" of ibex near the village of Khande, I started out early one morning with Soobana and Kareem and some Balti shikaris to look for them. The cold at 6.30 a.m. was intense, and the village, which lay quite low down, was almost buried in snow.

We proceeded up the hill on the east side of the nullah, and after a very stiff climb we reached the top of the first ridge. Here we at once saw some ibex feeding in some precipitous ground to our left, but as they were all small ones we continued the ascent and went on to the place where the two Balti shikaris had seen the herd the evening before.

We crossed a snowy slope, the Baltis making a path in front by treading down the snow, and at length reached the edge of a small precipice. On looking over we saw the ibex just disappearing round the corner of a spur, alarmed I fancy by the lumps of snow we had let fall as we walked along the steep sides of the slope, or by the loud talking of the Baltis, whom both I and Soobana tried to keep quiet without avail. The going was very heavy, the snow in places being up to our shoulders. However, we struggled on to the top of the next ridge. Here the leading Balti went on and peered over very clumsily, showing the whole of his head and shoulders. He at once turned and beckoned frantically to me to come up to him, which I did, Soobana struggling on to a rock just above me. I saw the ibex already

heap. (This man was some little way below us, and so was able to see round the corner.) Reloading quickly, I got the rifle up just as another fine ram topped the rock, I fired, and we all saw he was hit as he plunged about in the snow, but eventually went on out of sight. I fired a third shot at another ram, which carried a good pair of horns, but he did not flinch to the shot. Whilst we were debating as to the best thing to do, the big ram suddenly appeared a little further on, slowly struggling up the slope in the deep snow. He was evidently hard hit, so putting up the sights to 350yds. I fired two more shots at him, but could not say if either hit him, as he still struggled on. As it was out of the question for me to think of following them, we sent the younger Balti down to the place where I had fired at the ibex to see the blood tracks, whilst Soobana, the old Balti, and I returned by the path we had come by. It was the first time I had seen ibex, and I was astonished at the large size of the beasts, which were as big as ordinary Indian donkeys. As we were going back, Soobana pointed out an old ram standing on some rocks about 800yds. above us. We got within 400yds. of him when he began to get restless. Soobana begged me to shoot, so resting the rifle on his shoulder I fired, the bullet splashing on the rock just under the ibex. A smaller ram, which we had not noticed, now sprang up and both stood gazing at us. Taking more elevation I fired again, and heard the bullet thud

on the big one and saw him stagger. Both beasts then turned and went along a narrow ledge of rocks out of sight. The small one soon reappeared, but the big one was nowhere to be seen. We struggled on through the snow, when we spied the big one lying down. However, he was up again in a moment, and began to follow the small one slowly up hill. Lying down I fired another shot at him, when he fell on to his hind quarters, and finally disappeared out of sight on the other side of some rocks.

Soobana then said we must leave him till we could get a Balti to go and fetch him, as the rocks were too steep. But I told him I meant to get him at once somehow, and that if he was afraid to go I would go by myself. After a fearful climb to try and get above him we found we were stopped by a precipice, and had to come back to where we had left the old Balti on the watch. We then heard shouts from below and the younger Balti appeared, saying he had

seen the beast roll down the rocks, that he was quite dead, and that he could be got at from below. When we reached the man he told us that I had hit all three of the herd I had first fired at, that the tracks led to an impassable precipice, but that the place could be got at from the other side next day. We went down and found the ram quite dead; he was a large beast, the horns, which were very thick



A FINE RAM.

on the move, there were six rams and some females, one of the former a very fine fellow. I lay flat on the rock and aimed at the big one just as he jumped on to the heap of snow covering a rock. I hardly expected to hit him at the distance, about 180yds., as I was so much out of breath and my hands were so cold from the snow. I pulled, and the younger Balti said he was sure I had hit him, as he saw the beast fall down the far side of the snow



and massive, measuring 33in. round the curve. We set to work and skinned him, leaving the meat for the vultures, since the shikaris, being Mussulmans, would not eat it, as they had not performed the "hallal" before the beast's death. It was dark before I reached home that night, and early next morning I sent out Kareem, the younger Balti, with some villagers and dogs to look for the other three wounded ibex. They returned in two days bearing the heads of all three, one a splendid pair of horns, measuring 40½in. round the curve and 10½in. round the base. The second measured 37½in. round the curve, and the third 36½in. They had found them all in a small nullah a couple of miles beyond the place where I had fired the shots.

## AT THE THEATRE.

THE success of "The Man of Forty" at the St. James's Theatre is very great. It is so great that Mr. Alexander's plans have undergone some derangement. We were to have seen here during the spring Mr. Sydney Grundy's serious modern play, based upon his one-act piece, written some years ago, "In Honour Bound"; but, by arrangement between author and manager, this has been postponed until the early autumn. Mr. Alexander could have followed "The Man of Forty" by Mr. Grundy's drama, but that would have been in the summer-time, a notoriously bad period of the year for theatricals, so Mr. Grundy obliged Mr. Alexander by allowing his piece to be postponed, and Mr. Alexander obliged in return by giving Mr. Grundy a promise of production at the best time of the theatrical year. Whenever it is produced, we anticipate the performance of Mr. Grundy's work with the liveliest interest.

Mr. Henry Hamilton, the poetic playwright, and Mr. Seymour Hicks, the energetic young writer of melodrama, have joined hands in an interesting literary partnership, and have agreed to provide the well-known American manager, Mr. Jacob Litt, with a strong drama, which, no doubt, if it proves popular across the Atlantic, will be seen in London in due course. The combination is an interesting one, for these gentlemen have been working in entirely different media till now, and the outcome of their joint efforts should be of a most promising kind. One of the plays Mr. Hamilton wrote many years ago he has never surpassed, if he has ever equalled—"Harvest," produced by Mr. Charles Hawtrey at the Princess's Theatre. It did not achieve the financial success it deserved, but this was probably because it was in advance of its time; the chances are that if a manager could be found enterprising enough to revive the play he would reap a very satisfactory harvest. Among many other pieces produced by Mr. Hamilton were "The Armada," the spectacular melodrama at Drury Lane, and innumerable adaptations, the most prominent of which was his version of "The Three Musketeers," which he made for Mr. Lewis Waller, and which was one of the adaptations around which such serious controversy raged a little while ago. Mr. Seymour Hicks's biggest success, so far, was "One of the Best," the military melodrama at the Adelphi Theatre; but he has provided the stage with many other contributions, most of which possessed a decided interest of their own.

When Mr. Tree set out to revive "Rip Van Winkle" at Her Majesty's Theatre, he determined to produce it on a modest scale as an "end of the season

fill up." But tradition has proved too strong for him, and the commanding rank of his playhouse has overridden his attempts to do something without the aid of wonderful scenery; but the theatrical writers have cut the ground from under his feet. They insisted that "Rip Van Winkle" would provide him with endless opportunities for that spectacle for which Her Majesty's Theatre is famous, and referred gloatingly to the chance of the Catskill Mountains. Consequently, Mr. Tree has bowed his head to the storm, and "Rip Van Winkle" will be produced on the great scale to which we are accustomed at Her Majesty's.

The engagement of Miss Lily Hanbury for the part of Gretchen is not only another proof of the foresight of Mr. Tree in choosing the right people to support him, but also of the artistic principles of Miss Hanbury. For, strange as it may seem, there are very few English "leading ladies" who would consent to "make up" as a middle-aged woman, as Gretchen has to in the latter part of the play, when Rip awakes from his sleep of many years. Gretchen, too, is a bit of a shrew, and this is not the sort of character our leading actresses care to assume. Another performance we shall watch with much interest is that of Mr. Franklin McLeay, who is sure to bring the atmosphere of the time and place over the footlights. Mr. Lew's Waller will not be seen in the cast.

"Marsac of Gascony" at Drury Lane is certain at least of a sweet and sympathetic heroine. The name of Miss Eva Moore guarantees that. Miss

Moore is a graceful and gracious actress, with a natural method which always wins its way with an audience.

The marked strides made by Miss Dorothea Baird in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at Her Majesty's are causing the curious to speculate as to the next opportunity this young actress will find for the proper display of talent which "Trilby" and the plays which followed it by no means exhausted. Many are saying that she would make a charming Portia, and there is much warrant for such a prophecy. She can speak blank verse without destroying the naturalness of the language; that she has sentiment and fire is proved conclusively by her *Hermia*. Whether or not she has that gift of humour so imperative to the proper delineation of Portia remains to be seen; but one would not be a little bit surprised to find that such were the case. In any case, no matter what the character may be, the next part essayed by Miss Baird will have an important bearing on her career, and will be watched with more than usually sympathetic interest.

It is said that we are to have a "matinée theatre" in town, on a permanent basis, and that here will be presented for runs of one week pronounced successes which have had their day in

the evening programmes at the leading theatres. Whether such a scheme would prove remunerative or not remains to be seen, for there are no precedents to go upon. We hope it will come to pass, and that the results will be such as to warrant its originators continuing it permanently.

The battle of "Quo Vadis" still continues to rage, and threatens to bring about an alteration in the copyright laws. Such a consummation is devoutly to be wished, for anything more chaotic than the present state of affairs it is impossible to imagine. M. Sienkiewicz, the Polish author of the novel which is causing all the pother, is totally unable to protect the fruits of his own brain, and is at the mercy of anyone in America or England who cares to come along and pirate his story. Meanwhile Mr. Barrett, who has entered into proper agreements with M. Sienkiewicz, is determined not to let the grass grow under his feet, and has initiated a campaign in favour of the reform of the copyright laws, using "Quo Vadis" as a lever.

It is to be a race between Messrs. Whitney and Canby, the owners of the



J. Caswell-Smith.

MISS DOROTHEA BAIRD.

Copyright

American "unauthorised" version, who will do their piece at the Adelphi, with, probably, Mr. Robert Taber and Miss Lena Ashwell in the chief parts, and Mr. Barrett, whose first production will be at Edinburgh. It is a pretty quarrel as it stands, and is likely to lead to some curious developments.

Sir Henry Irving, on his belated return to London, will not produce the St. Bartholomew play he at first intended, but will content himself with a series of revivals, beginning with "Olivia," in which he and Miss Ellen Terry and the Lyceum company will appear. It is good news to know that their tour in America has been in the nature of a triumph, and that Sir Henry comes back to us with the fruits of one of the most handsomely rewarded theatrical tours in the history of the stage.

PHILOBUS.

## Bar Point-to-Point Steeplechases.

THE modern point-to-point is the true steeplechase, the so-called steeplechases over made fences under Grand National Hunt rules having degenerated into a scurry over made-up fences by cast-off flat racers. What we have to guard against is the danger that under malign influences these really sportsmanlike events should sink into the cocktail imposture which some—not all—chasing meetings have become. Every effort should be made to make the race a competition between genuine fox-catchers who have been hunting all the season. For this reason some writers have suggested that rules should be made to confine point-to-point races to the annual meeting of the hunt. But this would exclude such genuinely sporting events as the Stock Exchange, the House of Commons, or the Bar Point-to-Point Steeplechases. It would be quite sufficient to make or enforce rules against flags or made-up fences, and to disqualify any horse which had run under Grand National Hunt rules. One of the main objects of the sport is to attract genuine hunters, and to make the race as like a good run with foxhounds as possible. If the riders be told to make the best of their way to some conspicuous point and come back, that is enough, for it gives a chance to the rider with an eye for country and the genuine hunter. This is the kind of horse and the rider we desire to encourage. There should never be more than three events on the card, two for the heavy and light weights respectively, and one for our friends the farmers. The professional racing element should be kept away as much as possible. It should be pure sport of the kind told of by Mr. John Welby when the Belvoir and Quorn in 1864 contended for the palm of victory in the famous race to the Coplow (a landmark you can see for miles) and the "Belvoir Ploughmen" were represented by Colonel Reeve's chestnut Haycock:



Photo.

THE WEIGHING-ROOM.

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"The Coplow is over! the stoutest has won,  
The light-weight has been beaten! the 'Lad' has been done.  
Right loud are the cheers that resound, you'll allow,  
For the Leicestershire grass has been beat by the plough."

In this case the "Lad," Colonel Forester, on a horse bought for the race, was beaten by a genuine heavy-weight hunter from Leadenham, on the Lincolnshire side.

Another most sporting affair was the race between six Quorn and six Pytchley men, which was run over a part of Belvoir's sweet vale. The Quorn won, and two of the chosen six were among the winners at Melton and Croxton Park this year. Of the six, Messrs. Muir and De Winton are with the Imperial Yeomanry, while all have been hunting this year from Melton, except Count Zborouski, who has attached himself to Mr. Gerald Hardy's famous pack at Atherstone.

Nor even yet have we forgotten the famous midnight steeplechase so vividly recorded by Mr. Cecil Fane in the last volume of "The House on Sport." In this case the competitors actually rode by the light of lamps. The spirit of these events is the true spirit for point-to-point races. But there is another side to the point-to-point meeting which is not its least

valuable characteristic—the social side, which draws together all interested in the hunt, and makes a pleasant afternoon for the farmers and their families.

If only we can keep this genuine sport pure from the taint of the modern race-course, from that cynical blackguardism which not all the pleasant style and easy writing of Mr. Spencer in his recent book, "The Great Game," can conceal from us, and which mars one of our most attractive and popular sports, we shall delight in it; but if not, point-to-point racing must follow chasing into the contempt and neglect which have overtaken the latter.

There are few better arguments for point-to-point racing of the best kind than the admirably managed meeting which Mr. W. W. Grantham arranged this year over the Harrow country. Bricks and mortar and wire have made that beautiful grass vale a forbidden land to hunting men, but it was the delight of our youth, and has so many memories of sporting worthies of the past—Charles Davis and the Royal Hunt—to whom the Harrow country was a name to conjure with.

Greenford Green is one of the most charming of country villages, though but a short walk from Ealing. Here, in the country hunted over by the Draghounds, who still can find a wireless line over grass, was the course of the Bar Point-to-Point races. So little has the great city affected the country that the pastures and big fences remind one of the Midlands. The course was a good one, and the first race produced quite a close finish between Mr. Bernard's Johnnie and Mr. Rupert Gwynne's Shamus. The latter gentleman won the light-weight race with



MR. JUSTICE GRANTHAM IN THE JUDGES' BOX.



Photo.

LEGAL LUMINARIES.

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Paudeen, and Mr. Justice Bucknill secured the Lockwood Challenge Cup with a nice chestnut horse, Longneck, well ridden by Mr. R. Phillpotts. The proceedings ended with a race for members of the local Drag, which was won by Mr. Fassnidge's Bampton.

## RACING NOTES.

**L**AST week I made some remarks on the starting-gate from the jockeys' point of view. I pointed out that the gate discounted their horsemanship and increased their dangers greatly. Of these views the confirmation by events has not been long in coming. Twice during the past few days the machine has caused accidents, more or less serious, to jockeys. Talking over the matter on the return from Derby with several owners and trainers, the general opinion was that the starting-machine's advantages did not counterbalance its failures. Certainly three favourites upset and five jockeys more or less injured is a heavy score on the debit side. The starting-gate is heartily disliked by all classes of racing men. Lord Durham is, however, a person who is very apt to have his own way, and he is determined that the gate shall have a fair trial. In this resolution he is perfectly right. Many writers were always extolling the gate and grumbling at the delays at the starting-post under the flag system. Now the gate is here, it is right that it should be thoroughly tested.

There is another point of interest which it may be well once more to speak of at the opening of a new season. Does the Jockey Club intend to put pressure on lessees of race-courses to make better provision for good order and the protection of visitors to their courses? If something is not done it is quite certain that sooner or later race-course management will be made a subject of legislation. Race-course ruffianism is of course a disgrace to our national sport, and not only so, but, unchecked, it bears most hardly on the poorer respectable class of racegoers.

Derby Meeting is always a pleasant one, and not least so because one reaches it by the Midland. Indeed, the races owe a great deal



Photo.

MR. J. G. BUTCHER MOUNTS.

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in an apprentice's plate; but King's Messenger is evidently in form this season, and should have a chance for the Great Metropolitan. As for the City and Suburban, fit and well Strike-a-Light looks like winning, and if Mazeppa is kept for this race her stable should know all about it. At the end of this week (Saturday, April 14th) the well-managed Alexandra Park should have a successful meeting. The London Cup is the event of the day, and will have no doubt a good entry. The result of this race will possibly affect our views for the City and Suburban. As the victory of Ambush II. is sure to draw attention to Diamond Jubilee—the Prince of Wales's colt—it is unfortunately true that he has been developing a very evil temper lately.

There are two meetings which must not be passed over, the Melton Steeplechases and Croxton Park. For the actual quality of the racing they may not be quite in the first rank, but for a day's pleasure they fulfil every requirement. It is no secret that but for Mr. Pryor and Elizabeth Lady Wilton there would have been no meeting at all at Burton Lazars. The course, which the followers of the Quorn or the Cottesmore would be indeed unlucky not to ride over for the season, is a beautiful one, but is rather stiff. This, however, is an advantage, as it keeps away a class of horse and rider which is not desired. The assemblage was probably, on the whole, the smartest seen on any race-course this year. I could tell you the names of many, but will only say that some of the best and hardest riders in the world and from all parts of it were present, as well as a large contingent of those Midland farmers who are such keen sportsmen. The chief event of the afternoon was the Ladies' Purse of 200 sovs., collected by Lady Wilton from the sportswomen of the various hunts. Mr. Russell Monro's Bertram won this from Dorlaston after an eventful race, in which all refused at least once. Mr. G. Saunderson rode the winner of this race, as also that of the Leicestershire Hunt Steeplechase—Dirkhampton, the property of Captain "Willie" Lawson. The gallant owner is at the front with the Yeomanry. The local talent knew something in the Farmers' Race, for they made Mr. J. Mackley's Mischief a strong favourite. Mr. H. Gale had a comfortable

ride, for he led all the way and won as he pleased. This was on Wednesday, and on the next day almost the same party met together again at Croxton Park. The Duke of Rutland entertained a party at



Photo.

THE SECRETARY OF THE PEGASUS CLUB.

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of their success to the railway arrangements. The racing on April 6th was good, and the keen rivalry between S. Loates and Tod Sloan was amusingly illustrated by the very bumping finish between Zanoni and Suppliant for the Welbeck Handicap Plate. The latter horse ran well, but could not quite give 25lb. away and make his own running. There was an objection, as no doubt there would have been if the result had been other than it was. The stewards, however, could say that one jockey was no worse than the other. In the Sudbury Stakes everyone was ago to see Mr. Musker's Melton—La Rosiere colt. The bookmakers quite reflected the opinion of good judges when they asked for odds. Seven to four was the price, but in fact it was any odds on him. The brown colt raced away when the barrier flew up, made all the running, and won easily. He is a handsome colt, and looks like growing. He has all the good looks of his father, though he does not favour him in colour. The La Rosiere colt has great scope and leverage. Altogether Melton's success has been the event of the early weeks of the season, and has established the reputation of the son of Master Kildare as a sire. It is true that some attempt has been made to discount the success of Mr. Musker's colts and fillies, but adhering to the sound principle of considering the style in which races are won as of more importance than the real or supposed quality of the defeated ones, I shall believe in the future of these youngsters. The running of Forcett in the Doveridge Handicap was disappointing; he put his ears back at the finish, and declined to try. Of course it was rather absurd to find Kempton Cannon riding



Photo.

MR. JUSTICE BUCKNILL AT THE BAR POINT-TO-POINT.

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Belvoir for the races. The favourites won six out of the seven events on the card. Lord Durham's Polycrates won the Granby Handicap, and the new Master of the Cottesmore the Private Sweepstakes with Goldmint. Both these horses had won at the same meeting last year. The Farmers' Plate fell to a charming chesnut mare, Roquette, belonging to Mr. J. Chamberlain. Everyone was glad that the races were held, and it was a popular act not to let them fall through on account of the war. There is but little space left to comment on Northampton. The chief points of interest at this meeting were Mr. Musker's successes with Oria in Earl Spencer's Handicap, and with the brown colt by Melton—Stole. It is true, of course, that Oria was second to Le Blizon, but the filly was seriously interfered with in the race, and after all was only beaten by a head. On the second day the accident with the starting machine occurred, and the exciting dead-heat between Schoolgirl and Roughside was won by the former in the run off. It was plain that the dead-heat was a bit of good riding on the part of Kempton Cannon. Flavus, who was much fancied, was only a neck behind the dead-heaters, and Nouveau Riche, Gadfly, and Ultimatum were all close up, from which we may justly infer that they were all very moderate.

VEDETTE.

## The Ancient Sport . . . of Buck Hunting.

IN only one spot in the kingdom, so far as I know, can this ancient sport be seen in perfection. The chase of the fallow buck is a revival of comparatively modern date. On Exmoor the wild red deer has been hunted continuously, but in the New Forest an attempt was made to exterminate the deer, and for a long time there was no hunting. Nimrod, who paid two visits to the New Forest only, speaks of hunting with the foxhounds which were then kept and hunted by Mr. Nicoll. Indeed, it is only quite recently that it has been possible to hunt throughout the season from August to May, the months of October and February being for obvious reasons excluded. It was in the late fifties that Mr. Lovell hunted the buck with his well known black and tans. In his time the deer was scarce, and every effort was made at the close of a run to save the life of the hunted buck. Mr. Lovell held office till 1893. The present Master is Mr. Festus Kelly of Nottinwood Park, Lyndhurst. There are a good stock of deer, and runs of from an hour to an hour and a-half are of frequent occurrence. It has long been a dream of the present writer to spend a month in the forest, and to enjoy the hunting while exploring the most perfect wild country remaining to us. For not even the enclosure acts, injudicious planting, or the many acts of vandalism committed here have been able to spoil the scenery or destroy the sense of wild Nature which it gives us. If you wish to explore a wild country there is no way so good as to hunt over it. In these woodland and moorland scenes, the cry of the pack, the tones of the horn, and the shouts of the huntsman and whipper-in, as a deer is roused or viewed, only add to the charms of the surroundings. My first day was a fortunate one, for the meet was at Bramble Hill, and thither came together hunting-men from many parts of England. Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, and Suffolk each contributed to the field, and there were many spectators on wheel, whether of the cart or the cycle.

Bramble Hill is situated in that northern part of the forest which is considered to be the best, and is not far from Lyndhurst, the best headquarters for the would-be hunter, and famous still for its oak trees. There are, the foresters say, six deer to be found in a particular spot, and taking the tufters (two couple), the Master, huntsman, and one whipper-in, followed by most of the field, jog off. The ride, in spite of a chilly rain-laden west wind, was delightful. The view from the hills we crossed is a wide one, and woodland and heather, the latter already gaining richness in colour with the promise of May, lie spread before us. The sun shone out and the distance was blue with the delicate tints of an English atmosphere.

But even scenery must give way to hunting, and I was all keenness to see my first buck found, as we turned into a wood and trotted up the ride. The deer had been harboured with wonderful accuracy, and before the hounds had been in covert a few minutes one threw his tongue. Then came an anxious moment, for it is not well for those who do not know the ways of the forest to lose touch, yet with an old buck before them hounds seemed to dodge about. Now here, now there, first in one direction came the deep-toned note of the tufters, and we rode somewhat blindly for the sound, only to find that hounds were speaking behind. But there was a gentleman on a grey cob who looked as if he knew, and him I followed. Through innumerable tracts, with oak and holly actually carried into a roof overhead, but with fairly good going under foot, at last we came to where the body of the pack, held in leash after the French fashion, were waiting. Nor had we long suspense. Whether by luck or good judgment the buck, a fine old fellow with a good head, dashed past almost within view of the straining pack. Another short wait while the huntsman and master brought the tufters to our hollows, and then the pack was laid on. This was a beautiful sight, for the hounds were very steady, with the result that we were soon galloping over the heather towards a wood. To one not unaccustomed to the smooth grass of the Midlands the going was somewhat alarming. I remember a well-known rider on Exmoor and in High Leicestershire telling me that galloping over the big fences of the Skeffington Vale was in some respects less trying to the nerve than really to gallop over the moors, and as Exmoor is, so is the New Forest. Even the great Nimrod, who was a lover of pace, has said: "The New Forest is a very awkward country to get across, and one in which, in my opinion, there is no great enjoyment of hounds *when they go the pace*" (the italics are his). But there is still less enjoyment in sitting on a long forest ride and wondering where hounds are, so that whatever be the pace you must try to do your best. Fortunately hounds never did run very fast, and there was a beautiful bit of hunting in a wood, the pack turning with the devious twistings of their buck. Once more in the open they seemed to run straight; but, alas! the buck had turned sharp back, and hounds were running in the line of some red deer disturbed by the hunt. The whipper-in got to their heads and worked back to find afresh the cunning old buck. But we never saw him again, and there our day's sport ended. I could tell the story of the afternoon run, but as I saw nothing but the find, I will say nothing, and, indeed, it is a painful subject. Since the misfortunes of our friends have in them something not wholly displeasing, there was a faint consolation in the fact that those who were thrown out were many and distinguished. We galloped about vaguely, but the pack had slipped

us, and one man on a good little cob and Mr. Gerald Lascelles saw what was to be seen until our second deer found refuge and safety in a herd, and the pack was stopped about four miles from Lyndhurst. To return for a moment to the find. A covert was drawn by the whole pack, a crash of music, a turn or two in covert, then silence, then home with what contentment and philosophy we might, and, indeed, there is only one thing I know that can in any way console one for such a downfall of the bright hopes of a hunting day, and that is to go out again on the following one. This I did, though the less noble fox was the object of pursuit. But though we enjoyed ourselves, or at any rate I did, yet as we galloped round and round a big wood there is not much to tell. Moreover, the pleasure of the day has been exactly expressed by a writer who went out in the same country over three score years ago; the hunt, he says, was "among trees and bushes, where the quick turning and flying to scent and cry was beautiful to those who could see it." There is another matter to be thankful for, and that is that hounds can run in the forest, where scent is good, as in all such rough countries. Altogether, I ended the week thinking that after all William the Conqueror and his son had been hardly dealt with by Lady Callcott and Mrs. Markham, and that when the Hampshire manors were afforested it was an act to be justified on the principle of giving the greatest happiness to the greatest number. As a matter of fact these monarchs were like some other distinguished personages, not so bad as they were painted.

## ON THE GREEN.

THE Houses of Parliament find themselves obliged to give up, for the time being, their annual cricket matches; but the Parliamentary Golf Handicap tournament will be played as usual—as usual, but with a difference. Hitherto it has been the rule that if the players drawn together could not mutually agree on a green, Tooting Bec should be the scene of their contest. Now, as we understand, three greens in the neighbourhood of London are named, on any one of which, by mutual consent, they may play their differences to a finish. A worthy resolution, worthy of the first legislative assembly in the world. But supposing Mr. Healy and Mr. Balfour to be drawn together; are they likely to come to "mutual agreement" about the wearing, or the choosing, of the green? Will their differences under these more liberal conditions ever be played to a finish? One is disposed to doubt it. It is, however, impossible to question the wisdom of legislators. One good thing they have resolved, not for the first time, to decide the preliminary testing rounds, which eliminate so many of the feeble folk, on the Sandwich course, a course eminently adapted for feeble folk's elimination. At all events legislators have advanced in wisdom since the days when it was compulsory to play every heat of this Parliamentary tournament on Tooting Bec. It was impossible for a golfer to feel the proper meed of respect for a legislative body that could frame, for its own discomfort, such a regulation as this. Be it said with all respect for the Tooting Bec green (which, by the way, is not at Tooting Bec at all, but at Furzedown). Tooting Bec is by no means a bad green, but there are better; and if a member of Parliament is not to have the best of everything, what is our Constitution coming to?

Harry Vardon, we see with pride, is upholding the golfing reputation that we sent him out with. He has been playing the better ball of Mr. Herbert Harriman, whom we understood to be the present amateur champion of America, as well as the crack player of the Garden City Golf Club (as the reports to hand describe him), and of Mr. Findlay Douglas, who was their amateur champion before Mr. Harriman took the title away from him; Mr. Harriman thus being the first native-born American to win the American amateur championship. The open championship, we think, has not even yet been won by a native. That is soon to come. In the meantime, if anything can lead quickly to that result it should be the object-lessons that Vardon is giving them all. He beat these two crack amateurs, on a course that one may suppose to be unfamiliar to him, by nine up and eight to play on the thirty-six hole match. That is to say, that they had no chance at all. Are we to take this as a "line" in regard to the comparative golfing ability of our own amateurs and the men of America? If we are, we have to deem ourselves the better men, for Mr. Laidlay and Mr. Balfour Melville at St. Andrews, Mr. Winterscale and Mr. Dennis Scott at Westward Ho and others even on Vardon's own familiar green of Scarborough, have had the better of the champion, playing their better ball against his.

In England (Scotland is more Conservative) county championships come more and more into vogue. Last year saw the beginning of the Sussex County championship. This year we notice for the first time (it is true it does not follow that it had no previous existence) the championship of Lincolnshire, which has just been concluded in favour of Mr. A. E. Park, as the individual champion. We cannot but think that the individual champion title is the more interesting part of these county championships, and the team championships less to be considered by way of glory, although possibly more fun is to be extracted from them.



WE have heard a nice story of a boy whom his mother rebuked for showing fear of a cow. Now it happened that the chiding mother had a great dislike and abhorrence, amounting to a dread, of that terrible insect the black-beetle. So the boy, when she said to him, "It is so foolish to be afraid of a cow," observed, reflectively, "Yes, but I wonder whether it is not more foolish to be afraid of a black-beetle." It is understood that that mother is still going up and down the world looking for the next reply.

The truth is that if we did not know a cow, and know what a nice, gentle, milky thing it is, we should not only be much afraid when we met one in a lonely way, but should be very foolish if we were not afraid. Had one never seen a cow before, it is difficult to imagine an animal whose appearance at first



sight would seem more truculent and formidable. The bulk of the thing, the length and the sharpness of its horns, and the air of study with which it surveys you, as if wondering where the horns would go in best; all this combines to create a creature more terrible than any that we know outside a nightmare. And if this is the aspect of the ordinary cow, how many times is its terror multiplied by the aspect under which the bovine race appears to us in a lonely Highland glen, where all the surroundings are full of mystery, of history of lawless deeds, where the Southron suspects men in kilts, and is terrified further with the far-off sound of the bagpipes, horrible in his ears. Under these influences it only requires the sudden apparition of A HERD OF HIGHLAND CATTLE to complete the disorder of his nerves and make him confess himself with shame repentant of his unworthy

In fact, these Highland cattle are generally gentle beasts, in spite of their fearful aspect. It is well not to get between any of the mothers of the herd and their babies, for in these circumstances they seem apt to suspect you of some kidnapping intent, and may be nasty; but this is a sentiment that must win our respect, and we ought not to be there. There is often an old bull going about with the herd, and he, too, is commonly kindly, not nearly so nasty a fellow as an Ayrshire bull is apt to be, though the latter looks so sleek and the former so shaggy. Now and again they are apt to take capricious dislikes, and we well remember hunting, with lantern and torch, for a friend of ours belated in returning to the lodge in one of the Western Islands, and finding him waist deep in a burn, where he had been, with few intervals, for some hours. He was the gentlest and kindest



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

A HERD OF HIGHLAND CATTLE.

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presence in "Caledonia, stern and wild." Under the tangled forelock of immensely long hair, the eyes of the creatures look out with a sinister leer that is appalling. It is all very well for those who know them to say that no glance can be more ruminant or gentle. The Southron in the Highland glen does not know them, and this is essentially one of those crises in which no one's experience except our own is the slightest comfort to us. Then the horns of the things spread at a singularly flat angle that constitutes a menace in itself; but it is especially the length of their shaggy hair that makes them look so Scotch and so terrible to an English eye. The heart stands still. Generally the herd stands still too. If the Southron can induce his heart to resume its beating strongly enough to bring him forward to the herd, the herd will almost always fly, and the Southron will think of Flodden Field.

of men, yet the bull had evidently conceived an ill opinion of him. In general the bull was a gentle thing, too; but in its capricious dislike of our friend it had hunted him into the water, and kept him there, fording the stream just below the pool in order to catch our friend when he came out on either side. *Homo* was armed with no weapon more important than a trout rod, so he was hardly on equal terms with *bos* and his horns. But *bos* took himself off on our approach, and *homo* was released. Luckily it was a warm evening, and he took no harm; for, if cold below, the midges had kept him warm above, to strike a balance.

The Highlanders look fine in a park; but it is in their native glens that they are in their proper surroundings and appear a natural complement of the wild and rugged scenery.

## ASH COURT FARM.

THREADING the devious lanes, lanes surely laid out by some past-time circumlocution office, and crossing the wide fields of this happy upland country, as your steps tend towards the high eastern plateau, you will note a gradual falling away of the more luxuriant forms of vegetation and a bleached, impoverished look in the soil. The tall elms are left behind; the oaks are fewer and smaller; instead of the fir tree comes up the thorn, and the furze bush replaces the hazel and the willow. But most noticeable of all is the greater frequency of the ash, which, unmarked before, now becomes the characteristic tree; you have, in fact, entered the ash tree country, a land where the underlying chalk is barely covered with a thin coating of flinty soil, where the grass is dry, fine, and silky, and on the banks the wild thyme and marjoram invite the passing humble bee; here, instead of the garden-loving thrush, you

will hear the lark sing all day long; the clouds seem higher above the earth, and the "winds austere and pure" are rarely hushed to rest. Here in May, however busy plough and harrow may be kept, and though the smoke and smell of burning weeds may be on every hill, there will still be a field or two in each landscape yellow with charlock, a sight as pleasant to the idle pedestrian as it is hateful to the farmer.

The peewit, with his angular wing and crested head, "tells his name to all the hills," not joyously, but in a weird, distressful tone, quite out of keeping with the slender elegance of his form and the beauty of his plumage. A certain sparseness and purity characterise the products of this region; in lower and fatter lands Nature may breed her lush damp leaves and fill her berries with poison, but here she is all airy and wholesome, and her breath is redolent

of the cowslip and the harebell. Such semi-barrenness appeals with a certain charm to the wilder, less sociable strain which, in spite of his general gregariousness, forms still an element in man's nature.

Reaching now the highest level, and turning another elbow in the lane, you come upon the metropolis of ash tree country. Here are the ancient aristocrats of the race, encircling as if in jealous guard the farmstead which bears their name. In their grey and antique strength they have fought a good fight against the four winds for many generations past, and they will flourish during as many more, for this dry air and clean soil bring no moist internal rottenness, no foul fungus corrupts the hard fibre of their limbs; one or two, having been polled in their youth, are now in consequence quite hollow, but they seem as full of life as their brethren, whilst by their greater bulk and lower stature they give variety and dignity to the assemblage.

The limbs of the trees are few, the inter-spaces large, and nowhere can be seen the mazy wealth of twigs which form such a florid network upon the elms and beeches; the buds are hard and black, they will resist the warm advances of the sun long after the rest of Nature has yielded in loving surrender. At their feet some ivy has found a roothold, but even the plant of Bacchus shows here a subdued temper. Down in the valley, amongst the jolly elms, the ivy runs riot in bushy luxuriance over the whole tree, but here with delicate fingers it has woven but a thin and partial mantle of finely-pointed leaves, in which the native green blends with subdued shades of grey, bronze, and purple.

The great size of the trees, the grey and yellow lichen which clings to their trunks, the remoteness of the situation, combine to impress the mind with a sense of hoar antiquity, and you will long to know or imagine something of the past history of this homestead. What vestiges are left to furnish hints? The house probably, the farm certainly, goes back at least two centuries; the church, the spire of which peeps above the tree tops two fields off, has been pitilessly restored, but a Norman font, a later piscina, and the timbers of belfry and spire have escaped the general devastation, and remind you of the Middle Ages. The parish itself is one of a series of "Hams," lying along the hills, and the name carries us back to the time when the Saxon farmer's one-roomed wooden "Hall" stood probably on or near the site of the present house, when his plough, not altogether unlike the old wooden instrument lying in the yard there, scratched shallow furrows in the field in which you stand, and the ancestors of yonder oaks and beeches furnished food for the herds of swine which formed his chief wealth. Farther on in the lane, all unnoted of the professed antiquary, a prehistoric burrow still holds its secret, and helps our thoughts back to an age before these or any fields were cultivated, when a race of needy savages, unable to face the manifold dangers of the forests which covered the lower grounds north and south, clung to these hills for safety and subsistence, sunk their pit dwellings in the chalk, and, with flints for tools, fashioned the flints of the soil into the axes, chisels, and arrow-heads still found here and there beneath the turf.

That wise scatter-brain, that profitable ne'er-do-well Thoreau, said that farmers were attractive to him in proportion to their poverty, that a highly cultivated farm was a big grease spot on the mantle of Nature. There would be little to offend such a highly refined taste here; signs of poverty and decadence are everywhere apparent.

The house, though of respectable antiquity, is by no means one of the homely farm cottages which, with their low-pitched sprawling roofs and warmly tiled gables, abound, to the delight of the wandering artist, in this and the neighbouring county. It is lofty and commodious, as befits a manorial court. Once the lord of the manor lived here, not quite a squire, but a rich yeoman, owning the freehold of all the land he tilled. Now the house is occupied by a tenant farmer of the humbler sort, and though in substantial repair, surrounded by a neglected garden, it has a faded and melancholy appearance. But it is in the farm premises that the chief change is most apparent; the yards are unusually spacious, and three large barns testify to the heavy corn crops which, notwithstanding the shallowness of the soil, were once harvested here; now stock and rickyards are well-nigh empty; the barns, with their walls and roofs in a picturesque state of raggedness, are used mainly as store and lumber rooms, or, perhaps, the cowsheds being in still worse repair, as cattle stalls, and contain not so much as a bushel of corn.

Oh! for the Northern Wizard's power of calling up other times and seasons at will. Could you in place of this black scene restore to sight one of the harvest days of long ago, what a lovely picture of earth's bounty and man's

industry would delight the eye. In that undulating field the mowers with powerful swinging strokes would be levelling the golden barley. A big, round wheat rick in the yard would be rapidly growing as the loaded waggons, seen here and there through the trees, wended slowly along the lanes, caught at and robbed, on behalf of their poor tenants the birds, by tall hedges and overhanging boughs. The mow in the big barn is filling up with the first crop of oats, the heavy loads come swinging into the yard, and the horses' hoofs thunder on the floor of the barn; the sun-rays breaking through chinks in the wall make lanes of golden light through the dusty air, and awaken a deeper orange in the rich hue of the straw. The boys are all gathered to tread the corn firmly into its bed, the huge pile gradually mounts to the beams and rafters of the roof, there to lie till the winter days bring the threshers with their flails. The mowing of barley, and the carrying of wheat and oats simultaneously, may seem an exaggerated activity, but things were on an extensive scale at this farm. Within living memory twelve plough teams would take the fields each morning in seed-time. The summer heat has dried the pond in the yard, and the outward-bound team turns aside to where the sheep-washing pool, fringed with rushes, lies under the shelter of a high bank and an overshadowing oak.

How beautifully the line of brown wheat stoops in the further upland is broken by the green of the intervening trees. The sky is of a radiant blue, and at what an immense height, emphasising the vastness of the dome, is that fan tracery of cirrhus clouds. Red and golden, well-nigh as bright as the garden flowers, are the apples on the orchard trees. Held aloft as they are in the luminous atmosphere, you may almost fancy them to be fruits of air rather than of the common earth. The chief song birds are silent, but the yellow-hammer on the orchard hedge will pipe his pleasant tune throughout the day, the swallows are twittering on the wing, and the contented cooing of the pigeons sounds from the roofs. Even the birds are "rejoicing with the joy of harvest." Many August days fall within 500 years, so that scenes like these have been often repeated in the history of the farm, and in these days of pessimistic thought it is good to call them to mind.

The present aspect of the place has, however, a pensive beauty peculiarly its own. In the clear air of the late afternoon the charm of pastoral melancholy settles down upon the scene, and it becomes indeed "a haunt of ancient peace." Go into the garden and this charm will strike you in all its fulness; there you can walk beneath an avenue of yews, once kept trimly cut, hedge fashion, but now growing wild; the ground underneath is thickly strewn with the dry brown sheddings, as if the tree were anxious to hide the bareness caused by its deep shadow. The house has old gables on this side, and hanging against the wall is surely the self-same pear tree, the rusted nails falling from the knots, which grew in Mariana's moated grange. One blackbird from a high bough is giving out that loud, wild song of his, a song which sounds the sweeter for the pause which comes between each stanza, a belated rook caws overhead, and the shuddering cry of the new-born lamb comes from the soft-littered lambing fold in the rickyard. The rest is deep silence.

By the courtesy of the farmer you may gain admittance to that most cosy of all the comfortable spots on this earth, the farm kitchen. Delighted you look around, and as the ruddy firelight reveals each detail of comfort, cleanliness, and utility, all graced by the charm of antiquity, you begin to doubt the wisdom of that "genteel" instinct which has caused the migration of the middle classes from the farmhouse kitchen to the suburban drawing-room.

And now darkness has settled down upon the farmstead. Man and beast and bird turn to their rest; the afternoon calm has given way to a strong easterly gale; the elementary powers are awake, and with them the ghosts of the men and things that have had their day in the old place seem to be up and abroad; the vexed trees wrestle and complain, and the aroused imagination sees in the vain beating of their boughs against the roaring current the struggles of those thin shades against the dark river of forgetfulness which carries them away.

ARTHUR SCAMMELL.

## Eton College Beagles.

ONCE before—in April, 1899—illustrations have appeared in COUNTRY LIFE of the workmanlike pack of beagles which are kept at Eton. But boys and hounds come and



Hills and Saunders.

MEET OF THE ETON COLLEGE BEAGLES.

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go, and no apology is required for the picture to which these lines are appended. Frankly we wish that packs of beagles could be established in connection with more public schools. There is no exercise healthier than that of running to hounds, and he who has followed beagles acquires a knowledge of the science of hunting and a true insight into the sport which is very often denied to the man or boy who has always had his horse to think about. Moreover, the boy who runs with beagles must necessarily be in sound condition, and he will not be in sound condition unless he leads a clean and healthy life. In fact, the existence of the Eton College Hunt is productive of many advantages and no disadvantages. It is also, as a correspondent of COUNTRY LIFE remarked a year ago, the nursery of Masters of Hounds who are Etonians may be traced to the fact that Eton boys are permitted to learn their hunting at school, and not only in the holidays. Amongst them may be named Lord Doneraile, Lord Lonsdale, Lord Bathurst, Mr. Austen Mackenzie, Sir Gilbert Granville, and Mr. Vincent Calmady, and they are not all.



"AWAY FROM THE MADDING CROWD."

## Photographic Competition.

ON account of the great success that attended our recent Photographic Competition, and the interest it created amongst a large number of the readers of COUNTRY LIFE, many of whom sent photographs of high artistic merit, it has been decided, in order to further encourage the art, which is so eminently suited to lovers of country life, to begin another competition for

### PHOTOGRAPHS OF SPRING SUBJECTS.

The beautiful effects to be obtained in the garden at this season of the year are varied, and although the following short list by no means covers the whole ground, it will suggest the class of subject that may be worthy of the attention of intending competitors:

**Spring Flowers.**—Particularly the artistic effects obtained by growing Narcissi, Scillas, Tulips, and other flowers in meadow grass, or beneath trees, by man and by Nature.

**Spring Flowers on the Rock Garden.**—To show effects not merely of many kinds, but of individual flowers in pretty aspects.

**Spring Flowers in the Border,** or massed upon the lawn or in beds.

**Spring Flowers in the Shrubbery.**

For the best set of not less than twelve photographs a prize of

### FIVE POUNDS

will be awarded.

The photographs should be silver prints—preferably on printing-out paper—not smaller than half-plate size, and should be carefully packed, and addressed to the Editor in a parcel bearing the words "Photographic Competition" on the outside. For the purpose of identification each individual photograph must be clearly marked with the name and address of the

competitor, but no responsibility for the safe keeping of the competing photographs can be accepted, although every care will be taken to return safely any unsuccessful photographs if stamps for this purpose are enclosed.

It is understood that all reproduction rights of the successful photographs will pass to the Proprietors of COUNTRY LIFE, and, if required, the negatives of these pictures will be given up to them. The Proprietors also reserve to themselves the right to make use of any of the unsuccessful photographs upon payment of from 5s. to 10s. 6d. for each picture published, according to their idea of merit.

The Competition will close on June 21st, and the decision of the Editor, which will be final and without appeal, will be announced as early as possible after this date.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### THE MALMAISON CARNATION.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Will you please give me some information about growing the Malmaison carnation? It is a flower becoming more popular every day, but it is not easy to grow, I find. Will you please give me some hints, which I dare say will also interest other readers?—ABBVILLE.

[The Malmaison carnation is difficult to cultivate, as you say, satisfactorily. An important point is to obtain good healthy stock to begin with, as without this failure is certain. The plants are propagated by layers, the operation being exactly the same as that for border carnations. As the plants that have done flowering are in pots they are generally planted out in a prepared border for the convenience of layering, and when this operation is performed a free sprinkling of rough sand should be made around the buried portion, as this greatly encourages root formation. This method, which succeeds perfectly during a hot, dry summer, is not always satisfactory if the weather be wet and cold, hence some cultivators keep the plants under glass and layer them in sphagnum moss. This is done in the following manner: A few leaves at the base of the shoot having been removed, a sharp knife is inserted just below a joint halfway through the stem, and then brought up to the next joint, thus leaving a strip or tongue, as it is called, just the same as for ordinary layering. A piece of moss is inserted below the tongue to prevent it again closing in position, and the whole is then bound round with half a handful of moss. If freely sprinkled so as to keep the moss fairly moist, young roots will be visible in about a month, when the layers may be potted singly into small pots, no attempt being made to detach the moss. The after treatment of both these and the plants in the open border will be the same, viz., pot them in 3in. pots, well drained, in a compost of two-thirds fibrous loam, and the remaining third leaf mould and sand in about equal proportions. The plants must be kept in a frame fairly close and shaded till the roots are again active, which will be in a few days, when plenty of air will be necessary. Grown on they should be fit for 3in. pots about the middle of October, and in these they will pass the winter and flower in May. Where large specimens are required the old plants are kept over a year blooming, all the flower stems being cut off down to the side shoots just beginning to push forth, and the plant then potted, 6in. or 7in. pots being used. Each branch must be secured to a stick, otherwise they are liable to split off just at the point of union with the main stem. During the summer they need all the air possible, but if in a frame the lights may be put on during heavy rains. Mildew sometimes attacks the leaves, to check which dust with sulphur, but a worse enemy is another fungus known as the rust, which causes the leaves to break out into numerous brown blotches. Sulphur may also be used for this, and various compounds have been put forward for its extermination, but careful watering and a free circulation of air seem to be the best remedy against its attacks.—ED.]

### WOUNDED ANIMALS IN WARFARE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—There are some things they do better in America. The reply of our War Office to a request that men might be allowed to be sent out to attend to animals left wounded on battle-fields is an expression of sympathy with the object, but a refusal on the plea that the men would not be under military control, and that, doing such work, they would not be protected by the terms of the Geneva Convention. The reply of the American military authorities to a similar request is the general order by Nelson A. Miles, major-general commanding the United States Army, "With a view to avoid extreme suffering among wounded horses or mules on the field of battle, it is hereby ordered that a veterinary surgeon, or some other person detailed by the commanding officer, will accompany troops in an engagement, whose duty it will be to put an end to the agonies of horses or mules that in his judgment are suffering to a degree requiring such action on his part." There is a refreshing absence of red-tapeism, and clear evidence of manly readiness to undertake initiative and personal responsibility, about this action of the commander of the United States Army that is worthy of imitation.—LAURENCE W. PIKE.

### HUNTING MEN AS A DEFENSIVE FORCE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The hunting season is nearly over, and before it closes I would venture through your paper to bring before hunting men the fact that if they would organise themselves as a branch of our auxiliary defensive forces, no such effective force in these days could be found all the world over. It would, indeed, be the revival of the so-called "Hunter Horse," a name by which the Yeomanry were first designated. Let then each hunt in the United Kingdom form a unit of such a force. These units would necessarily vary according to the size of the hunt, but as there are more than 200 hunts in the United Kingdom, we might reasonably reckon upon having a large force of Hunter Horse capable of going anywhere across an enclosed country, and doing anything they were ordered to do. They should carry an infantry rifle—not the comparatively useless cavalry carbine—following in dress, equipment, drill, arms, and tactics the model of Colonel Bower's Hants Horse which he raised forty years ago. They were the admiration of all military men who saw them. But the wise War Office authorities allowed this unique force to die out, instead of retaining them as a model for all firearm mounted forces, because they at the time of their disbandment were short of the regulation number entitling them to Government pecuniary aid. Now, some years ago there was at the

Royal United Service Institution a block horse on which sat a lay figure, equipped, accoutred, and armed as a Hants Horseman, but since the Royal United Service Institution has changed its quarters, and Inigo Jones's banqueting hall, with its historic associations and Rubens's painted ceiling, has been, with the sanction of Her Majesty's Office of Works, turned into the Royal United Service Institution Museum, and become a receptacle for old models, arms, uniforms, and accoutrements, the Hants model horseman and his charger have somehow disappeared. Though, however, thus lost to sight, they are to my memory dear, as they represented by far the most efficient form of cavalry force I had ever seen, and I am now endeavouring to get a similar model replaced in the Royal United Service Institution Museum. The efficiency of Colonel Bower's Horse is best shown by quoting the words addressed to them by the inspecting officer, an Artilleryman, many years ago: "In the face of such a force no artillery could traverse a country." Let then the hunting men of the United Kingdom patriotically form themselves into a like force, as they can so easily do, and thus greatly strengthen our home defensive means.—WEMYSS.

#### A CREAM-COLOURED MOLE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It may interest some of your readers who are students of natural history to hear that a cream-coloured specimen of the common mole was recently trapped at Broome Place, Norfolk. Such specimens are said to be more or less common in those districts where moles are abundant, and instances of almost every tint are to be seen in the British Museum. At the same time, the ordinary individual rarely, if ever, comes across skins which are not of the usual blackish-grey. Possibly this may catch the eye of some of your readers who have had extensive depredations committed on their estates by the mole and been forced to destroy large numbers in consequence; if so, it would be interesting to learn whether they have taken any specimens of abnormal colouring.—GLANORE.

#### DUCKS ROOSTING IN TREES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Coming across the Broad Walk in Kensington Gardens recently, I noticed two ducks (from the Round Pond) roosting on the top of the tree stump, about 20ft. from the ground, at the corner of the Broad Walk and the path leading in front of the Palace. It was, to me, such an unusual sight that I should be glad to hear if it were not so.—PALACE GATE.

[It is, of course, unusual for ducks to roost in trees, but by no means unprecedented; in fact, several cases of ducks nesting on trees at a considerable height from the ground have been recorded.—ED.]

#### AN AMERICAN SPANIEL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Thinking it might be of interest to you, I enclose a photograph which I took of an old spaniel named Bob belonging to my brother. My brother got him when he was only a puppy and took him to Michigan, where Bob received his education in camp, and developed into an exceptionally good American partridge dog. On my brother's return from the West the dog came with him, and ever since that time has been an important member of the family. The dog is now thirteen years old, and owing to his rather hard early life is showing signs of his advanced years; however, he knows and welcomes all the friends of the family, and in his master's absence evidently considers that he has to act the part of host towards any visitors. He is so human he almost seems to speak, and is beloved by old and young alike. As an Englishman living away from home I particularly appreciate your paper, and read it regularly every week.—J. LAIRD BUSK, New York.

#### AUSTRALIAN DOGS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I notice, in your number dated November 18th, you mention Cocker spaniels as interesting and valuable dogs. They are a favourite breed with me,



READY FOR A HUNT.

and I thought your readers might be interested in a photograph of one from Western Australia. I send you one of my champion Cocker taken with his mates, two fox-terriers; they are three great favourites, and are very fond of ratting. The picture was taken on Christmas morning, as they were waiting for a rat to be let out of a trap. The spaniel's name is Zola, but we always call him Joe; he has taken prizes whenever shown, but I am afraid his show days are over, as he is getting very old and rather too heavy; he is the son of Jack Po, who came to Victoria from England. The terriers are great-grandchildren of the well-known champion Buffett. We have taken your pretty paper ever since it started, and always look forward to it.—MINA E. FRASER.

P.S.—The photographs, as you will see, were taken by an amateur.



#### GARDENING IN THE GRASS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I should be much obliged if you would give me some information about growing flowers in the grass. It is such a fascinating subject, and I have lately seen in some lowland meadows narcissi of early kinds flowering delightfully. They have made me wish intensely to do the same thing here. My soil is a fairly light loam, well drained, and, I think, eminently suited to the growth of bulbous flowers. I should be very thankful for advice. Of course it is too late to plant now, but information given me will be welcome, and I can pick up hints as I go about to various gardens. I am very fond of gardening, and read your notes with delight.—H. C., Maidenhead.

[This is a very interesting subject, and we are pleased to know that you intend to introduce flowers into some meadow-lands. If possible, you should secure a volume of the Royal Horticultural Society's Journal containing a paper read before the society by Mr. Robinson in 1891. It contains much useful information. The time to plant is, of course, the autumn or early winter, but the former season is the better, and the most useful family is the narcissus, which contains so many kinds that succeed well in the grass. Mr. Robinson, in the paper referred to, makes mention especially of the narcissi for the grass, in the following words: "Five years ago I planted many thousands in the grass, the most important group being the star narcissus in large variety. I never doubted that I should succeed with them, but did not know I should succeed so well. They thrived admirably and flowered well; the flowers are large and handsome, and to my surprise have not diminished in size. In open, rich heavy bottoms, along hedgerows, in quite open loamy fields, in every position I have tried them. They are delightful when seen near at hand, and also effective at a distance. The leaves ripen, disappear before mowing time, and do not in any way interfere with farming. The harrowing and rolling of the fields in spring, however, are a little against the foliage, and probably with the finer narcissi a better result could be obtained by wood walks and open copses, which abound in so many English country places." The flower gardening in the grass at Kew is very beautiful, and you should, as you are within reasonable distance, visit the gardens from time to time. Here you will see narcissi in thousands, broad masses near the woodland and in the open grass, the Poet's narcissus in particular being freely used. Many other plants are used also—the tulips, such as Tulipa suaveolens, grape hyacinths (Muscari), the meadow saxifrage (Saxifraga granulata), scillas of all kinds, bluebells, and the Spanish scilla in variety (Scilla campanulata), snowflakes, crocuses, snowdrops, winter aconites, snake's-head (Fritillaria Meleagris) in variety, and the anemones. Writing of the blue Apennine anemone, one of the most beautiful of all flowers in the grass, Mr. Robinson says: "Of this I planted several thousand roots in grass. Not having any beds or borders near the house where I wanted it, I put it in meadows immediately around the house in light broken groups and masses. It flowers and increases every year without the slightest attention, and, being earlier in growth than grass, ripens and disappears before the meadow grass has to be cut. This is a most important point, and shows what may be done with many beautiful spring flowers."—ED.]



SUSPENSE